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# LORD BYRON

AND

SOME OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES;

WITH

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,

AND OF HIS

VISIT TO ITALY.

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BY LEIGH HUNT.

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“It is for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak truth.

“In the examples, which I here bring in, of what I have heard, read, done, or said, I have forbid myself to dare to alter even the light and indifferent circumstances. My conscience does not falsify one tittle. What my ignorance may do, I cannot say.”

MONTAIGNE.

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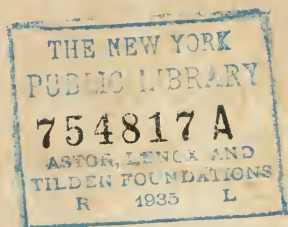
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1828.

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## PREFACE.

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The reader will oblige me by letting me explain to him, how it is that the volume here offered to his perusal, came to be what it is. I think it due to myself to make the explanation; and as a conscientious reader of the prefaces of other men, I may request his indulgence without scruple.

The work was originally intended to be nothing but a selection from the author's writings, preceded by a biographical sketch. I engaged for it, together with another work, as soon as I returned to England; but the delight of finding myself among my old scenes and friends, the prospect of better health and resources, the feeling of the first taste of comfort (a novelty unknown for years,) and the very dread of seeing this new piece of rose-colour in my existence vanish before the re-exertion of my brain and the ink-spots it produces between me and the sun,—all conspired with bad habits of business and the sorriest arithmetic, to make me avail myself una-

wares of the handsome treatment of my publisher, and indulge in too long a holiday. I wrote, but I wrote little: I had not even yet learned how much I might have done with that little, if done regularly; and the consequence was, that time crept on, uneasiness returned, and I found myself painfully anxious to show my employer how much I would fain do for him. The worst of it was, that the sick hours which I dreaded on a renewal of work, returned upon me, aggravated by my not having dared to encounter them sooner; and my anxieties became thus increased. I wished to make amends for loss of time: the plan of the book became altered; and I finally made up my mind to enlarge and enrich it with an account of Lord Byron.

It had been wondered, when I returned to England, how it was that I did not give the public an account of my intimacy with Lord Byron. I was told that I should put an end to a great deal of false biography, and do myself a great service besides. My refusal of this suggestion will at least show, that I was in no hurry to do the work for my own sake; and, to say the truth, it would never have been done at all, but for the circumstances above-mentioned. I must even confess, that such is my dislike of these personal histories, in which it has been my lot to become a party, that had I been rich enough, and could have repaid the handsome conduct of Mr. Colburn with its proper interest, my first impulse on finishing the



work would have been to put it in the fire. Not that I have not written it conscientiously, and that it is not in every respect fit to appear; but it has long ceased to be within my notions of what is necessary for society, to give an unpleasant account of any man; and as to my own biography, I soon became tired of that. It is true, I should have entered into it in greater detail, and endeavoured to make the search into my thoughts and actions of some use, seeing that I had begun it at all; but I was warned off of this ground as impossible on account of others, and gladly gave it up. The Byron part of the work I could not so well manage. What was to be told of the Noble Poet, involved of necessity a painful retrospect; and humanize as I may, and as I trust I do, upon him as well as every thing else,—and certain as I am, that although I look upon this or that man as more or less pleasant and admirable, I partake of none of the ordinary notions of merit and demerit with regard to any one,—I could not conceal from myself, on looking over the manuscript, that in renewing my intercourse with him in imagination, I had involuntarily felt a re-access of the spleen and indignation which I experienced, as a man who thought himself ill-treated. With this, to a certain extent, the account is coloured, though never with a shadow of untruth; nor have I noticed a great deal that I should have done, had I been in the least vindictive, which is a vice I disclaim. If I know

any two things in the world, and have any two good qualities to set off against many defects, it is that I am not vindictive, and that I speak the truth. I have not told all: for I have no right to do so. In the present case it would also be inhumanity, both to the dead and the living. But what I have told, is not to be gainsaid. Perhaps had I felt Lord Byron's conduct less than I did, I should have experienced less of it. Flattery might have done much with him; and I felt enough admiration of his talents, and sympathy with his common nature, to have given him all the delight of flattery without the insincerity of it, *had it been possible*. But nobody, who has not tried it, knows how hard it is to wish to love a man, and to find the enthusiasm of this longing worse than repelled. It was the death of my friend Shelley, and my own want of resources, that made me add this bitter discovery to the sum of my experience. The first time Lord Byron found I was in want, was the first time he treated me with disrespect. I am not captious: I have often been remonstrated with for not showing a stronger sense of enmity and ill-usage: but to be obliged, in the common sense of the word, and disobliged at the same time, not only in my reasonablest expectations, but in the tenderest point of my nature, was what I could not help feeling, whether I had told the world of it or not. Besides, Lord Byron was not candid with me. He suffered himself to take measures,



and be open to representations, in which I was concerned, without letting me know; and I know of no safety of intercourse on these terms, especially where it should be all sincerity or nothing.

Nevertheless, I subscribe so heartily to a doctrine eloquently set forth\* by Mr. Hazlitt,—that whatever is good and true in the works of a man of genius, eminently belongs to and is a part of him, let him partake as he will of common infirmities,—that I cannot without regret think of the picture I have drawn of the infirmities of Lord Byron, common or uncommon, nor omit to set down this confession of an unwilling hand. *Fecit mœrins*. Let it be turned against myself, if it ought. The same may be said of my remarks on Mr. Hazlitt.† If no man reduces himself to a greater necessity for it than he, by the waywardness and cruelty of his temper, no man deserves it more for the cuts and furrows which his temper ploughs in his own face, and the worship which he pays to truth and beauty, when it is

\* In the “ Plain Speaker,” vol. ii. p. 418.

† Since writing this Preface, the article here alluded to has been omitted, though not on Mr. Hazlitt’s account, or my own; for however I might regret speaking disagreeable truths of any man, much more of one whose unquestionable love of truth would have reconciled him to the hearing them, the article had quite enough of what was panegyrical in it to do him justice. But more readers might have mistaken the object of it, than was desirable; and Mr. Hazlitt is ready enough, at all times, to save others the necessity of exhibiting his defects. Twenty such articles would not have put an end to the good understanding between us; so genuine indeed is his love of truth, violently as his passions may sometimes lead him to mistake it.

not upon him. When we see great men capable of being inhuman in some things, when they are all over humanity in others, and add to the precious stock of human emotion, one is frightened to think what mistakes we may commit in our own self-knowledge. I, for one, willingly concede that the reader may know me better than myself, and punish me in his thought accordingly. Let me have only the benefit of the concession. I have been forced to give up, in my time, too many dreams of self-love, to deny myself the consolation of candour.

The account of Lord Byron was not intended to stand first in the book. I should have kept it for a climax. My own reminiscences, I fear, coming after it, will be like bringing back the Moselle, after devils and Burgundy. Time also, as well as place, is violated; and the omission of a good part of the auto-biography, and substitution of detached portraits for inserted ones, have given altogether a different look to the publication from what was contemplated at first. But my publisher thought it best; perhaps it is so; and I have only to hope, that in adding to the attractions of the title-page, it will not make the greater part of the work seem unworthy of it.

# LORD BYRON

AND SOME OF

## HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

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THE first time I saw Lord Byron, he was rehearsing the part of Leander, under the auspices of Mr. Jackson, the prize-fighter. It was in the river Thames, before he went to Greece. I had been bathing, and was standing on the floating machine adjusting my clothes, when I noticed a respectable-looking manly person, who was eyeing something at a distance. This was Mr. Jackson waiting for his pupil. The latter was swimming with somebody for a wager. I forget what his tutor said of him; but he spoke in terms of praise. I saw nothing in Lord Byron at that time, but a young man, who, like myself, had written a bad volume of poems; and though I had a sympathy with him on this account, and more respect for his rank than I was willing to suppose, my sympathy was not an agreeable one; so, contenting myself with seeing his Lordship's head bob up and down in the water, like a buoy, I came away.

Lord Byron was afterwards pleased to regret that I had not staid. He told me, that the sight of my volume at Harrow had been one of his incentives to write verses, and that he had had the same passion for friendship that

I had displayed in it. To my astonishment, he quoted some of the lines, and would not hear me speak ill of them. This was when I was in prison, where I first became personally acquainted with his Lordship. His harbinger was Moore. Moore told me, that, besides liking my politics, he liked "The Feasts of the Poets," and would be glad to make my acquaintance. I said I felt myself highly flattered, and should be proud to entertain his Lordship as well as a poor patriot could. He was accordingly invited to dinner. His friend only stipulated, that there should be "plenty of fish and vegetables for the noble bard," his Lordship at that time being Brahminical in his eating. He came, and we passed a very pleasant afternoon, talking of books, and school, and the Reverend Mr. Bowles; of the pastoral innocence of whose conversation some anecdotes were related, that would have much edified the spirit of Pope, had it been in the room.

I saw nothing at first but single-hearted and agreeable qualities in Lord Byron. My wife, with the quicker eyes of a woman, was inclined to doubt them. Visiting me one day, when I had a friend with me, he seemed uneasy, and asked without ceremony when he should find me alone. My friend, who was a man of taste and spirit, and the last in the world to intrude his acquaintance, was not bound to go away because another person had come in; and besides, he naturally felt anxious to look at so interesting a visiter: which was paying the latter a compliment. But his Lordship's will was disturbed, and he vented his spleen accordingly. I took it at the time for a piece of simplicity, blinded perhaps by the flattery insinuated towards myself; but my wife was right. Lord Byron's nature, from the first, contained that mixture of disagreeable with pleasanter qualities, which I had afterwards but too much occasion to recognize. He subsequently called on me in the prison several times, and used to bring books for my *Story of Rimini*, which I was then writing. He would not let the footman bring them in. He would enter with a couple of quartos under his arm; and give you to understand, that he was prouder of being a friend and a man of letters, than a lord. It was thus that by flattering one's vanity, he persuaded us of his own freedom from it; for



he could see very well, that I had more value for lords than I supposed.

In the correspondence at the end of the present memoir, the reader will find some letters addressed to me at this period by Lord Byron. He was a warm politician, and thought himself earnest in the cause of liberty. His failure in the House of Lords is well known. He was very candid about it; said he was much frightened, and should never be able to do any thing that way. Lords of all parties came about him, and consoled him; he particularly mentioned Lord Sidmouth, as being unaffectedly kind. When I left prison, I was too ill to return his visits. He pressed me very much to go to the theatre with him; but illness, and the dread of committing my critical independence, alike prevented me. His Lordship was one of a management that governed Drury-lane Theatre at that time, and that made a sad business of their direction, as amateur-managers have always done. He got nothing by it but petty vexations, and a good deal of scandal.

I was then living at Paddington. I had a study looking over the field towards Westbourne Green; which I mention, because, besides the pleasure I took in it after my prison, and the gratitude I owe to a fair cousin, who saved me from being burnt there one fine morning, I received visits in it from two persons of a remarkable discrepancy of character—Lord Byron and Mr. Wordsworth. Of Mr. Wordsworth I will speak hereafter. Lord Byron, I thought, took a pleasure in my room, as contrasted with the splendour of his great house. He had too much reason to do so. His domestic troubles were just about to become public. His appearance at that time was the finest I ever saw it, a great deal finer than it was afterwards, when he was abroad. He was fatter than before his marriage, but only just enough so to complete the manliness of his person; and the turn of his head and countenance had a spirit and elevation in it, which though not unmixed with disquiet, gave him altogether a nobler look, than I ever knew him to have, before or since. His dress, which was black, with white trowsers, and which he wore buttoned close over the body, completed the succinctness and gentlemanliness of his appearance. I remember one day, as he stood look-

ing out of the window, he resembled in a lively manner the portrait of him by Phillips, by far the best that has appeared; I mean the best of him at his best time of life, and the most like him in features as well as expression. He sat one morning so long, that Lady Byron sent up twice to let him know she was waiting. Her Ladyship used to go on in the carriage to Henderson's Nursery Ground, to get flowers. I had not the honour of knowing her, nor ever saw her but once, when I caught a glimpse of her at the door. I thought she had a pretty earnest look, with her "pippin" face; an epithet by which she playfully designated herself.

The first visit I paid Lord Byron was just after their separation. The public, who took part with the lady, as they ought to do, (women in their relations with the other sex being under the most unhandsome disadvantages) had, nevertheless, no idea of the troubles which her husband was suffering at that time. He was very ill, his face jaundiced with bile; the renouncement of his society by Lady Byron had disconcerted him extremely, and was, I believe, utterly unlooked for; then the journals and their attacks upon him, were felt severely; and to crown all, he had an execution in his house. I was struck with the real trouble he manifested, compared with what the public thought of it. The adherence of his friends was also touching, I saw Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Scrope Davies (college friends of his) almost every time I called. Mr. Rogers was regular in his daily visits; and Lord Holland, he said, was very kind to him. Finally, he took the blame of the quarrel to himself; and he enlisted my self-love so far on the side of Lady Byron, as to tell me that she liked my poem, and had compared his temper to that of Giovanni, my heroine's consort. In all this I beheld only a generous nature, subject perhaps to ebullitions of ill temper, but candid, sensitive, extremely to be pitied, and if a woman knew how, or was permitted by others to love him, extremely to be loved.

What made me come the more warmly to this conclusion, was a letter which he showed me, written by Lady Byron *after* her departure from the house, and when she was on her way to the relations, who persuaded her not to return. It was signed with the epithet above-mentioned; and was written in a spirit of good humour,

and even fondness, which though containing nothing but what a wife ought to write, and is the better for writing, was, I thought, almost too good to show. But the case was extreme: and the compliment to me, in showing it, appeared the greater. I was not aware at that time, that with a singular incontinence, towards which it was lucky for a great many people that his friends were as singularly considerate, his Lordship was in the habit of making a confidant of every body he came nigh.

I will now tell the reader, very candidly, what I think of the whole of that matter. Every body knows, in the present beautiful state of the relations between the sexes, what is meant by marriages of convenience. They generally turn out to be as inconvenient, as persons, who are said to have arrived at years of discretion, are apt to be indiscreet. Lord Byron's was a marriage of convenience,—certainly at least on his own part. The lady, I have no doubt, would never have heard of it under that title. He married for money, but of course he wooed with his genius; and the Lady persuaded herself that she liked him, partly because he had a genius, and partly because it is natural to love those who take pains to please us. Furthermore, the poet was piqued to obtain his mistress, because she had a reputation for being delicate in such matters; and the lady was piqued to become a wife, not because she did not know the gentleman previously to marriage, but because she did, and hoped that her love, and her sincerity, and her cleverness would enable her to reform him. The experiment was dangerous, and did not succeed. Another couple might have sat still, and sacrificed their comfort to the vanity of appearing comfortable. Lord Byron had too much self-will for this, and his lady too much sincerity,—perhaps too much alarm and resentment. The excess of his moods, which out of the spleen, and even self-reproach of the moment, he indulged in perhaps beyond what he really felt, were so terrifying to a young and mortified woman, that she began to doubt whether he was in possession of his senses. She took measures, which exceedingly mortified him, for solving this doubt; and though they were on good terms when she left an uneasy house to visit her friends in the coun-



try, and Lady Byron might, I have no doubt, have been persuaded by him to return, had there been as much love, or even address, on his side, as there was a wish to believe in his merits on hers, it is no wonder that others, whom she had known and loved so much longer, and who felt no interest in being blind to his defects, should persuade her to stay away. The "*Farewell*," that he wrote, and that set so many tender-hearted white handkerchiefs in motion, only resulted from his poetical power of assuming an imaginary position, and taking pity on himself in the shape of another man. He had no love for the object of it, or he would never have written upon her in so different a style afterwards. Indeed, I do not believe that he ever had the good-fortune of knowing what real love is,—meaning by love the desire that is ennobled by sentiment, and that seeks the good and exaltation of the person beloved. He could write a passage now and then, which showed that he was not incapable of it; but the passion on which he delights to dwell is either that of boys and girls, extremely prone and boarding-school; or of heroines, who take a delight in sacrificing themselves to wilful gentlemen.

I thought differently on this business at the time, though rather to the exculpation of the gentleman, than blame of the lady. My present conclusions were confirmed during my visit to Italy. There is no doubt, that Lord Byron felt the scandal of the separation severely. It is likely, also, that he began to long for his wife's adherence the more, when he saw that she would not return. Perhaps he liked her the better. At all events, she piqued his will, which was his tender side; the circles were loud in his condemnation; and he was in perplexity about his child; in whom, as his only representative, and the descendant of two ancient families, he took great pride to the last. But his feelings, whatever they were, did not hinder him from wreaking his resentment in a manner which every one of his friends lamented; nor from availing himself, at a future day, of those rights of matrimonial property, which the gallant and chivalrous justice of the stronger sex has decreed to itself, as a consolation for not being able to make the lady comfortable.

From the time of my taking leave of Lord Byron in



England to the moment of our meeting in Italy, I scarcely heard of him, and never from him. He had become not very fond of his reforming acquaintances. Shelley he knew, and lived a good deal with in Switzerland; and he was intimate again with him in Italy; yet, in the list of the only persons whom, on some occasion or other, he mentioned publicly as having seen in that country, Mr. Shelley's name was omitted. I was therefore surprised, when I received the letter from my friend, which the reader will find in the Correspondence at the end of this memoir, and which contained a proposal from my former acquaintance, inviting me to go over, and set up a work with him. Mr. Shelley himself had repeatedly invited me abroad; and I had as repeatedly declined going, for the reason stated in my account of him. That reason was done away by the nature of this new proposal. I was ill; it was thought by many I could not live; my wife was very ill too; my family was numerous; and it was agreed by my partner in the Examiner, that while a struggle was made in England to reanimate that paper, injured by the peace, and by a variety of other circumstances, a simultaneous endeavour should be made in Italy to secure new aid to our diminished fortunes, and new friends to the cause of liberty. My family, therefore, packed up their books, and prepared to go by sea.

Of my voyage I will give an account hereafter. My business at present is to speak of Lord Byron, to whose Italian residence I therefore hasten. In the harbour of Leghorn I found Mr. Trelawney. He was standing with his knight-errant aspect, dark, handsome, and mustachio'd, in Lord Byron's boat, the Bolivar, of which he had taken charge for his Lordship. In a day or two I went to see the noble Bard, who was in what the Italians call *villegiatura* at Monte-Nero; that is to say, enjoying a country-house for the season. I there met with a singular adventure, which seemed to make me free of Italy and stiletos before I had well set foot in the country. The day was very hot; the road to Monte-Nero was very hot, through dusty suburbs; and when I got there, I found the hottest-looking house I ever saw. Not content with having a red wash over it, the red was the most unseasonable of all reds, a salmon

colour. Think of this, flaring over the country in a hot Italian sun!

But the greatest of all the heats was within. Upon seeing Lord Byron, I hardly knew him, he was grown so fat; and he was longer in recognizing me, I had grown so thin. He was dressed in a loose nankin jacket and white trowsers, his neckcloth open, and his hair in thin ringlets about his throat; altogether presenting a very different aspect from the compact, energetic, and curly-headed person, whom I had known in England.

He took me into an inner-room, and introduced me to a young lady in a state of great agitation. Her face was flushed, her eyes lit up, and her hair (which she wore in that fashion) looking as if it streamed in disorder. This was the daughter of Count Gamba, wife of the Cavaliere Guiccioli, since known as Madame, or the Countess, Guiccioli,—all the children of persons of that rank in Italy bearing the title of their parents. The Conte Pietro, her brother, came in presently, also in a state of agitation, and having his arm in a sling. I then learned, that a quarrel having taken place among the servants, the young Count had interfered, and been stabbed. He was very angry; Madame Guiccioli was more so, and would not hear of the charitable comments of Lord Byron, who was for making light of the matter. Indeed there was a look in the business a little formidable; for, though the stab was not much, the inflictor of it threatened more, and was at that minute keeping watch under the portico with the avowed intention of assaulting the first person that issued forth. I looked out of window, and met his eyes glaring upward, like a tiger. The fellow had a red cap on, like a sans-culotte, and a most sinister aspect, dreary and meagre, a proper caitiff. Thus, it appeared, the house was in a state of blockade; the nobility and gentry of the interior all kept in a state of impossibility by a rascally footman.

How long things had continued in this state I cannot say; but the hour was come when Lord Byron and his friends took their evening ride, and the thing was to be put an end to somehow. Fletcher, the valet, had been despatched for the police, and was not returned. It was wondered, among other things, how I had been suffered to enter the house with impunity. Somebody conceived,

that the man might have taken me for one of the constituted authorities; a compliment which few Englishmen would be anxious to deserve, and which I must disclaim any pretensions to. At length we set out, Madame Guiccioli earnestly entreating "Bairon" to keep back, and all of us waiting to keep in advance of Conte Pietro, who was exasperated. It was a curious moment for a stranger from England. I fancied myself pitched into one of the scenes in "The Mysteries of Udolpho," with Montoni and his tumultuous companions. Every thing was new, foreign, and violent. There was the lady, flushed and dishevelled, exclaiming against the "*scelerato*;" the young Count, wounded and threatening; the assassin, waiting for us with his knife; and last, not least in the novelty, my English friend, metamorphosed, round-looking, and jacketed, trying to damp all this fire with his cool tones, and an air of voluptuous indolence. He had now, however, put on his loose riding-coat of mazarin blue, and his velvet cap, looking more lordly than before, but hardly less foreign. It was an awkward moment for him, not knowing what might happen; but he put a good face on the matter; and as to myself, I was so occupied with the novelty of the scene, that I had not time to be frightened. Forth we issue at the door, all squeezing to have the honour of being the boldest, when a termination is put to the tragedy by the vagabond's throwing himself on a bench, extending his arms, and bursting into tears. His cap was half over his eyes; his face gaunt, ugly, and unshaved; his appearance altogether more squalid and miserable than an Englishman would conceive it possible to find in such an establishment. This blessed figure reclined weeping and wailing, and asking pardon for his offence; and to crown all, he requested Lord Byron to kiss him.

The noble Lord conceived this excess of charity superfluous. He pardoned him, but said he must not think of remaining in his service; and the man continued weeping, and kissing his hand. I was then amused with seeing the footing on which the gentry and their servants stand with each other in Italy, and the good-nature with which the fiercest exhibitions of anger can be followed up. Conte Pietro, a generous good-humoured fellow, accepted the man's hand, and shook it with great good-



will; and Madame Guiccioli, though unable to subside so quickly from her state of indignant exaltation, looked in relenting sort, as if the pitying state of excitement would be just as good as the other. In fine, she concluded by according the man her grace also, seeing my Lord had forgiven him. The man was all penitence and wailing, but he was obliged to quit. The police would have forced him, if he had not been dismissed. He left the country, and called in his way on Mr. Shelley, who was shocked at his appearance, and gave him some money out of his very disgust; for he thought nobody would help such a fellow if he did not.

The unpleasant part of the business did not end here. It was, remotely, one of the causes of Lord Byron's leaving Italy; for it increased the awkwardness of his position with the Tuscan Government, and gave a farther unsteadiness to his restless temper. His friends, the Gambas, who all lived with him, father as well as children, were already only upon sufferance in Tuscany. They had been expelled their native country, Romagna, for practices with the Carbonari; and Lord Byron, who identified himself with their fortunes, became a party to their wanderings, and to the footing on which they stood wherever they were permitted to abide. The Grand-duke's government had given him to understand, that they were at liberty to reside in Tuscany, provided as little was heard of them as possible. The *fracas* that happened in the street of Pisa, a little before I came, had given a shock to the tranquillity of this good understanding, Count Gamba's retinue having been the most violent persons concerned in it; and now, another of his men having caused a second disturbance, the distrust was completed. Lord Byron's residence in Tuscany was made uneasy to him. It was desired, that he should separate himself from the Gambas: and though I believe, that even at that time, he would have been glad to do so; and though, on the other hand, it was understood that a little courtesy on his part towards the Grand-duke and Duchess, the latter of whom was said to be particularly desirous of seeing him at Court, would have given him a *carte-blanche* for all parties, yet his pride in that instance, and his usual tendency to be led by those about him in the other, prevented his taking either of these

steps; and he turned to his house at Pisa; only to reside there two or three months longer, when he departed for Genoa.

Having settled our friend, the lachrymose ruffian, we took our drive in the barouche, in the course of which we met the police-officer, and my old acquaintance Fletcher, with his good-humoured, lack-a-daisical face. Fletcher was for being legitimate, and having his wife out to Italy. I had made an offer to the lady to bring her with us by sea, which she politely declined; doubtless, out of fear of the water: but I brought him a box full of goods, which consoled him a little. I fear I am getting a little gossiping here, beyond the record; such is the contamination of these personal histories; but Fletcher, having by nature an honest English face, the round simplicity of which no sophistication had yet succeeded in ruining, ladies of various ranks in Italy, Venetian countesses, and English cook-maids, had a trick of taking a liking to it; and the presence of Mrs. Fletcher might afterwards have saved me some trouble. This, however, is a bold conjecture. Perhaps it might have been worse. O Beaumont! hadst thou been living in the times of this the namesake of thy fellow-dramatist—but I am told here, that my apostrophes will be getting scandalous.

I returned to Leghorn; and taking leave of our vessel, we put up at a hotel. Mr. Shelley then came to us from his *villeggiatura* at Lerici. His town abode, as well as Lord Byron's, was at Pisa. I will not dwell upon the moment. We talked of a thousand things, past, present, and to come. He was the same as ever, with the exception of less hope. He could not be otherwise. But he prepared me to find others not exactly what I had taken them for. I little thought at the time, how much reason I should have to remember his words.

Leghorn is a polite Wapping, with a square and a theatre. The country around is uninteresting, when you become acquainted with it; but to a stranger, the realization of any thing he has read about it is a delight, especially of such things as vines hanging from trees, and the sight of Apennines.

Mr. Shelley accompanied us from Leghorn to Pisa, in order to see us fixed in our new abode. Lord Byron left Monte-Nero at the same time, and joined us. We occu-

pied the ground-floor of his Lordship's house, the Cassa Lanfranchi, on the Lung'Arno. The remainder was inhabited by himself and the Gambas; but the father and son were then absent. Divided tenancies of this kind are common in Italy, where few houses are in possession of one family. It has been said that Lord Byron portioned off a part of his own dwelling, handsomely fitted it up for us, and heaped on us in this, as in other matters, a variety of benefactions. In the course of my narrative I must qualify those agreeable fictions. In the first place, Lord Byron had never made use of the ground-floor. Formerly, it was not the custom to do so in great mansions, the splendour of the abode commencing up-stairs: nor is it now, where the house is occupied by only one family, and there is room for them without it; unless they descend for coolness in summer-time. Of late years, especially since the English have recommenced their visits, it is permitted to parlours to be respectable. In country-houses of a modern standing, I have seen them converted into the best part of the dwelling; but the old mansions were constructed to a different end; the retainers of the family, or the youngest branches, if it was very large, being the only persons who could with propriety live so near their mother earth. The grated windows that are seen in the ground-floors of most private houses in Italy, have survived the old periods of trouble that occasioned them; and it is doubtless to those periods that we must refer for the plebeianism of parlours.

The Cassa Lanfranchi is said to have been built by Michael Angelo, and is worthy of him. It is in a bold and broad style throughout, with those harmonious graces of proportion which are sure to be found in an Italian mansion. The outside is of rough marble. Lower down the Lung'Arno, on the same side of the way, is a mansion cased with polished marble. But I have written of these matters in another work. The furniture of our apartments was good and respectable, but of the plainest and cheapest description, consistent with that character. It was chosen by Mr. Shelley, who intended to beg my acceptance of it, and who knew, situated as he and I were, that in putting about us such furniture as he used himself, he could not pay us a handsomer or more welcome compliment. When the apartments were fitted



up, Lord Byron insisted upon making us a present of the goods himself. Mr. Shelley did not choose to contest the point. He explained the circumstance to me; and this is the amount of the splendour with which some persons have been pleased to surround me at his Lordship's expense. I will here mention what I have happened to omit respecting another and greater matter. Two hundred pounds were sent me from Italy, to enable me to leave England with comfort. They came from Lord Byron, and nothing was said to me of security, or any thing like it. Lord Byron had offered a year or two before, through Mr. Shelley, to send me four hundred pounds for a similar purpose, which offer I declined. I now accepted the two hundred pounds; but I found afterwards that his Lordship had had a bond for the money from Mr. Shelley. I make no comment on these things. I merely state the truth, because others have mis-stated it, and because I begin to be sick of maintaining a silence, which does no good to others, and is only turned against one's self.

We had not been in the house above an hour or two, when my friend brought the celebrated surgeon, Vacca, to see Mrs. Hunt. He had a pleasing intelligent face, and was the most gentleman-like Italian I ever saw. Vacca pronounced his patient to be in a decline; and little hope was given us by others that she would survive beyond the year. She is now alive, and likely to live many years; and Vacca is dead. I do not say this to his disparagement; for he was very skilful, and deserved his celebrity. But it appears to me, from more than one remarkable instance, that there is a superstition about what are called declines and consumptions, from which the most eminent of the profession are not free. I suspect, that people of this tendency, with a proper mode of living, may reach to as good a period of existence as any other. The great secret in this as in all other cases, and indeed in almost all moral as well as physical cases of ill, is in diet. If some demi-god could regulate for mankind what they should eat and drink, he would put an end, at one stroke, to half the troubles which the world undergo, some of the most romantic sorrows with which they flatter themselves not excepted. It is by not exceeding in this point, and by keeping natural hours, that

such nations as the Persians are enabled to be cheerful, even under a load of despotism; while others, among the freest on earth, are proverbial for spleen and melancholy. Our countrymen, manly as they are, effeminately bewail the same climate, which the gypsy, with his ruddy cheek, laughs at. But one change is linked with another; there must be more leisure and other comforts to stand people instead of these ticklings and crammings of their despair; and the vanity of old patchwork endurance is loath to see any thing but vanity in the work of reformation.

The next day, while in the drawing-room with Lord Byron, I had a curious specimen of Italian manners. It was like a scene in an opera. One of his servants, a young man, suddenly came in smiling, and was followed by his sister, a handsome brunette, in a bodice and sleeves, and her own hair. She advanced to his Lordship to welcome him back to Pisa, and present him with a basket of flowers. In doing this, she took his hand and kissed it; then turned to the stranger, and kissed his hand also. I thought it a very becoming, unbecoming action; and that at least it should have been acknowledged by a kiss of another description; and the girl appeared to be of the same opinion, at least with regard to one of us, who stood blushing and looking in her eyes, and not knowing well what to be at. I thought we ought to have struck up a quartett. But there might have ensued a quintett, not so harmonious; and the scene was hastily concluded.

It is the custom in Italy, as it was in England, for inferiors to kiss your hand in coming and going. There is an air of good-will in it that is agreeable; but the implied sense of inferiority is not so pleasant. Servants have a better custom of wishing you a good evening when they bring in lights. To this you may respond in like manner; after which it seems impossible for the sun to "go down on the wrath," if there is any of either party.

In a day or two Mr. Shelley took leave of us to return to Lerici for the rest of the season, meaning however to see us more than once in the interval. I spent one delightful afternoon with him, wandering about Pisa, and visiting the cathedral. On the night of the same day, he took a post-chaise for Leghorn, intending next morning to sign his will in that city, and then depart with his



friend Captain Williams for Lerici. I earnestly entreated him, if the weather was violent, not to give way to his daring spirit and venture to sea. He promised me he would not; and it seems that he did set off later than he otherwise would have done, and apparently at a more favourable moment. I never beheld him more. The superstitious might discern something strange in that connexion of his last will and testament with his departure; but the will it seems, was not to be found. The same night there was a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, which made us very anxious; but we hoped our friend had arrived before then. When Mr. Trelawney came to Pisa, and told us he was missing, I underwent one of the sensations which we read of in books, but seldom experience; I was tongue-tied with horror. The rest is told in another part of the work; and I may be spared dwelling on the subject. From that time Italy was a black place to me.

Lord Byron requested me to look upon him as standing in Mr. Shelley's place, and said that I should find him the same friend that the other had been. My heart died within me to hear him; I made the proper acknowledgment; but I knew what he meant, and I more than doubted whether even in that, the most trivial part of friendship, he could resemble Mr. Shelley if he would. Circumstances unfortunately rendered the matter of too much importance to me at the moment. I had reason to fear:—I was compelled to try:—and things turned out as I dreaded. The public have been given to understand that Lord Byron's purse was at my command, and that I used it according to the spirit with which it was offered. *I did so.* Stern necessity, and a large family, compelled me; and during our residence at Pisa, I had from him, or rather from his steward, to whom he always sent me for the money, and who doled it me out as if my disgraces were being counted, the sum of seventy pounds. This sum, together with the payment of our expenses when we accompanied him from Pisa to Genoa, and thirty pounds with which he enabled us subsequently to go from Genoa to Florence, was all the money I ever received from Lord Byron, exclusive of the two hundred pounds in the first instance, which he made a debt of Mr. Shelley's by taking his bond. I have some peculiar notions

on the subject of money, as the reader will see more fully. They will be found to involve considerable difference of opinion with the community in a state of things like the present, particularly in a commercial country; and many may think me as deficient in spirit on that point, as I think them mistaken in their notions of what spirit is, and mistakenly educated. I may be wrong (as people say when they think themselves in the right;) but in the mean time, judging even by what they themselves think of the little happiness and disinterestedness that is to be found in the present state of things, I am sure they are not right; and that the system of mere bustle and competition ends in little good to any body. I can see an improvement in it ultimately, when the vicissitude comes which every body attributes to the nature of human society, and which nobody seems to believe in with regard to their own customs;—but I shall be digressing too far. Among other things, in which I differ in point of theory (for in practice I am bound to say that of late, though for other reasons, I have totally altered in this particular,) I have not had that horror of being under obligation, which is thought an essential refinement in money matters, and which leads some really generous persons, as well as some who only seek personal importance in their generosity, to think they have a right to bestow favours which they would be mortified to receive. But at the same time in this as in every thing else, “the same is not the same.” Men and modes make a difference: and I must say two things for myself, for which every body may give me credit, who deserves credit himself; first, that although (to my great sorrow and repentance) I have not been careful enough to enable myself to be generous in this respect towards others, in any degree worth speaking of, nor even (with shame I say it) just to my own children (though I trust to outlive that culpability,) yet I have never refused to share my last sixpence (no idle phrase in this instance) with any friend who was in want of it; and second, that although it has been a delight to me to receive hundreds from some, I could not receive without anguish as many pence from others; nor should I ever, by any chance, have applied to them, but for a combination of circumstances that mixed me up with them at the moment. I do not mean to say that Lord By-

ron was above receiving obligations. I know not how it might have been with respect to large ones, and before all the world. Perhaps he was never reduced to the necessity of making the experiment. But he could receive some very strange and small ones, such as made people wonder over their wine; and he could put himself to, at least, a disadvantage in larger matters, usually supposed to be reciprocal, which made them wonder still more. If I am thought here to touch upon very private and delicate things, especially regarding a person who is no more, I must offer three more remarks to the consideration of those, and those only, whom I have just appealed to; I mean, such as being speakers of truth themselves, have an instinct in discovering those that resemble them. The first is, that Lord Byron made no scruple of talking very freely of me and mine; second, that in consequence of this freedom, as well as from the gratuitous talking of those who knew nothing about the matter, very erroneous conclusions have been drawn about us on more than one point; and third, that it is a principle with me never to give others to understand any thing against an acquaintance, not only which I would not give, but which I *have* not given himself to understand; a principle, to which this book will have furnished no exception.\* It may be judged by this how little I have been in the habit of speaking against any body, and what a nuisance it is to me to do it now.

There was another thing that startled me in the Casa Lanfranchi. I had been led to consider the connexion between Lord Byron and Madame Guiccioli as more than warranted by Italian manners. Her husband was old enough to be her father. Every body knows how shamefully matches of this kind are permitted to take place even in England. But in Italy they are often accompanied, and almost always followed, by compromises of a very singular description, of which nobody thinks ill; and in fine, I had been given to understand that the attachment was real; and that it was rescuing Lord Byron from worse connexions; and that the lady's

\* If it might appear otherwise with regard to Mr. Moore, whom I have never seen or corresponded with since his efforts against the Liberal, he has not been the less aware of the feelings entertained on the subject by myself and others.



family (which was true) approved it. I was not prepared to find the father and brother living in the same house; but taking the national manners into consideration, and differing very considerably with the notions entertained respecting the intercourse of the sexes in more countries than one, I was prepared to treat with respect what I conceived to be founded in serious feelings; and saw, even in that arrangement, something which, though it startled my English habits at first, seemed to be a still farther warrant of innocence of intention, and exception to general rules. It is true, that when the Pope sanctioned her separation from her husband, he stipulated that she should live with her father; and as the separation took place on account of the connexion with Lord Byron, the nullification of the edict in thus adhering to the letter and violating the spirit of it, may have had an ill look in a Catholic country. But times are altered in that matter; and what enabled me the better to have a good opinion of the arrangement, was the conclusion I came to respecting the dispositions of the old Count and his son, both very natural and amiable persons, with great simplicity of manners, and such a patriotic regard for their country, as had not only committed their reputation for wisdom in the eyes of the selfish, but got them into real trouble, and driven them into banishment. And I am of opinion to this day, that they considered their conduct, in warranting the intimacy in question, not only to be justifiable but laudable; advantageous to the habits of a man, of whose acquaintance they felt proud; and perhaps even as making some amends to the lady, for the connexion which it superseded. The family came from Ravenna. The people in that quarter are more simple and unsophisticated than in the more frequented parts of Italy; worse perhaps where they are bad, that is to say, more gross and violent; but better (at least in the northern sense of the word) where they are good—something more allied to the northern character and to the Germans. The women are apt to be fair, and to have fair tresses, as the lady in question had. The men also are of lighter complexions than is usual in Italy. The old Count had the look of an English country gentleman, with a paternal gossiping manner, and apparently no sort of pride. The young one, who has since been known and esteemed in England, and

is an enthusiast and active partisan in the cause of Greece, was equally pleasing in his manners, and evinced great interest in all that regarded the progress of freedom and knowledge. He would ask, with all the zest of an Englishman, what was doing by Lord Castlereagh and the House of Commons; and when I apologised to him for running on in my bad Italian, would reassure me with the best grace in the world, and say it was delightful to him to converse with me, for I gave him "*hope*." The Italians are very kind to bad speakers of their language, and ought to shame us in that matter. I confess, I can never hear a foreigner speak bad English without such a tendency to laugh as puts me to the torture; whereas I have never known an Italian's gravity disturbed by the most ludicrous mistakes, but in one instance, and then it was the idea and not the word that discommoded him. I have known them even repeat your mistakes with an unconscious look, as if they were proper expressions. I remember walking once with my young acquaintance, Luigi Guianetti, of Pisa, all the way from Florence to Maiano, and holding a long ethical discourse on the superiority of the "good clever man" to the "bad clever man," in the course of which I must have uttered a thousand malapropisms, not one of which did he give me a sense by a smile.

But to return to the Gambas. The way in which the connexion between the young Countess and Lord Byron had originated, and was sanctioned, was, I thought, clear enough; but unfortunately it soon became equally clear that there was no real love on either side. The lady, I believe, was not unsusceptible of a real attachment, and most undoubtedly she was desirous that Lord Byron should cultivate it, and make her as proud and as affectionate as she was anxious to be. But to hear her talk of him, she must have pretty soon discerned, that this was impossible: and the manner of her talking rendered it more than doubtful whether she had ever loved, or could love him, to the extent that she supposed. I believe she would have taken great pride in the noble Bard, if he would have let her; and remained a faithful and affectionate companion as long as he pleased to have her so; but this depended more on his treatment of her, and still more on the way in which he conducted him-

self towards others, than on any positive qualities of his own. On the other hand, he was alternately vexed and gratified by her jealousies. His regard being founded solely on her person, and not surviving in the shape of a considerate tenderness, had so degenerated in a short space of time, that if you were startled to hear the lady complain of him as she did, and that too with comparative strangers, you were shocked at the license which he would allow his criticisms on her. The truth is, as I have said before, that he had never known any thing of love but the animal passion. His poetry had given this its graceful aspect, when young:—he could believe in the passion of Romeo and Juliet. But the moment he thought he had obtained to years of discretion, what with the help of bad companions, and a sense of his own merits for want of comparisons to check it, he had made the wise and blessed discovery, that women might love himself though he could not return the passion; and that all women's love, the very best of it, was nothing but vanity. To be able to love a quality for its own sake, exclusive of any reaction upon one's self-love, seemed a thing that never entered his head. If at any time, therefore, he ceased to love a woman's person, and found leisure to detect in her the vanities natural to a flattered beauty, he set no bounds to the light and coarse way in which he would speak of her. There was coarseness in the way in which he would talk to women, even when he was in his best humour with them. I do not mean on the side of voluptuousness, which is rather an excess than a coarseness; the latter being an impertinence, which is the reverse of the former. I have seen him call their attention to circumstances, which made you wish yourself a hundred miles off. They were connected with any thing but the graces with which a poet would encircle his Venus. He said to me once of a friend of his, that he had been spoilt by reading Swift. He himself had certainly not escaped the infection.

What completed the distress of this connexion, with respect to the parties themselves, was his want of generosity in money-matters. The lady was independent of him, and disinterested; and he seemed resolved that she should have every mode but one, of proving that she could remain so. I will not repeat what was said and la-



mented on this subject. I would not say any thing about it, nor about twenty other matters, but that they hang together more or less, and are connected with the truth of a portrait which it has become necessary to me to paint. It is fortunate that there are some which I can omit. But I am of opinion that no woman could have loved him long. Pride in his celebrity, and the wish not to appear to have been mistaken or undervalued on their own parts, might have kept up an appearance of love, long after it had ceased; but the thing would have gone without doubt, and that very speedily. Love may be kept up in spite of great defects, and even great offences,—offences too against itself. Lord Byron, out of a certain instinct, was fond of painting this in his poetry. But there are certain deficiencies, which by depriving a passion of the last resources of self-love necessary to every thing human, deny to it its last consolation,—that of taking pity on itself; and without this, it is not in nature that it should exist. Lord Byron painted his heroes criminal, wilful, even selfish in great things; but he took care not to paint them mean in little ones. He took care also to give them a great quantity of what he was singularly deficient in,—which was self-possession: for when it is added, that he had no address, even in the ordinary sense of the word,—that he hummed and hawed, and looked confused, on very trivial occasions,—that he could much more easily get into a dilemma than out of it, and with much greater skill wound the self-love of others than relieve them,—the most common-place believers in a poet's attractions will begin to suspect, that it is possible for his books to be the best part of him.

From the dilemma into which I thus found myself thrown, I was relieved by a very trivial circumstance. My wife knew nothing of Italian, and did not care to learn it. Madame Guiccioli could not speak English. They were subsequently introduced to one another during a chance meeting, but that was all. No proposition was made for an intimacy on either side, and the families remained separate. This, however, was perhaps the first local cause of the diminished cordiality of intercourse between Lord Byron and myself. He had been told, what was very true, that Mrs. Hunt, though living in all respects after the fashion of an English wife, was any thing but illiberal with regard to others; yet he saw her taking no steps for a far-

ther intimacy. He learnt, what was equally true, that she was destitute, to a remarkable degree, of all care about rank and titles. She had been used to live in a world of her own, and was, and is, I really believe, absolutely unimpressible in that respect. It is possible, that her inexperience of any mode of life but her own, may have rendered her somewhat jealous in behalf of it, and not willing to be brought into comparison with pretensions, the defects of which she is acute to discern; but her indifference to the nominal and conventional part of their importance is unaffectedly real; and it partakes of that sense of the ludicrous, which is so natural to persons to whom they are of no consequence, and so provoking to those who regard them otherwise. Finally, Lord Byron, who was as acute as a woman in those respects, very speedily discerned that he did not stand very high in her good graces; and accordingly he sat her down in a very humble rank in his own. As I oftener went to his part of the house, than he came to mine, he seldom saw her; and when he did, the conversation was awkward on his side, and provokingly self-possessed on hers. He said to her one day, "What do you think, Mrs. Hunt? Tre-lawney has been speaking against my morals! What do you think of that?"—"It is the first time," said Mrs. Hunt, "I ever heard of them." This, which would have set a man of address upon his wit, completely dashed, and reduced him to silence. But her greatest offence was in something which I had occasion to tell him. He was very bitter one day upon some friends of mine, criticising even their personal appearance, and that in no good taste. At the same time, he was affecting to be very pleasant and good-humoured, and without any "offence in the world." All this provoked me to mortify him, and I asked if he knew what Mrs Hunt had said one day to the Shelleys of his picture by Harlowe? (It is the fastidious, scornful portrait of him, affectedly looking down.) He said he did not, and was curious to know. An engraving of it, I told him, was shown her, and her opinion asked; upon which she observed, that "it resembled a great school-boy, who had had a plain bun given him, instead of a plum one." I did not add, that our friends shook with laughter at this idea of the noble original, because it was "so like him." He looked as blank as possible, and never again criticised the personal



appearance of those whom I regarded. It was on accounts like these, that he talked of Mrs. Hunt as being no great things." Myself because I did not take all his worldly common-places for granted, nor enter into the merit of his bad jokes on women, he represented as a "proser;" and the children, than whom, I will venture to say, it was impossible to have quieter or more respectable in the house, or any that came less in his way, he pronounced to be "impracticable." But that was the reason. I very soon found that it was desirable to keep them out of his way; and although this was done in the easiest and most natural manner, and was altogether such a measure as a person of less jealousy might have regarded as a consideration for his quiet, he resented it, and could not help venting his spleen in talking of them. The worst of it was, that when they did come in his way, they were nothing daunted. They had lived in a natural, not an artificial state of intercourse, and were equally sprightly, respectful, and self-possessed. My eldest boy surprised him with his address, never losing his singleness of manner nor exhibiting pretensions of which he was too young to know any thing, yet giving him his title at due intervals, and appearing, in fact, as if he had always lived in the world instead of out of it. This put him out of his reckoning. To the second, who was more struck with his reputation, and had a vivacity of temperament that rendered such lessons dangerous, he said, one day, that he must take care how he got notions in his head about truth and sincerity, for they would hinder his getting on in the world. This, doubtless, was rather intended to vent a spleen of his own, than to modify the opinions of the child: but the peril was not the less, and I had warning given me that he could say worse things when I was not present. Thus the children became "impracticable;" and luckily, they remained so.

One thing, among others in which he found myself impracticable, annoyed him exceedingly; so much so, that I would have given it up, and the rest too, if the change would not have done more harm than good. I the more readily speak of it, because it reminds me of something which I have omitted, and which I might reasonably be accused of omitting to my own advantage. While I was writing the "Story of Rimini," Lord By-

ron saw the manuscript from time to time, and made his remarks upon it. He spoke also to Murray respecting the publication. Murray was of an opposite side in politics both to the noble Lord and myself; but he was glad to publish with his Lordship, for considerations which he found not incompatible with his political philosophy; and he said that he was willing to publish for me, out of a sense of liberality and fair dealing. A friend of mine had told me, as an instance of his superiority to mere party views, that he piqued himself upon a "Life of Napoleon" which he was about to publish, and which was to be very impartial. In short Murray had himself importuned me some years before to write for "The Quarterly Review." I will not swear, that in putting the "Story of Rimini" into his hands, I had not something of an instinctive sense that I was securing myself against the more violent hostilities of that review. I will not swear this, because there is always something in the "last recesses of the mind," of which spectators may be better judges than ourselves. But Mr. Hazlitt, with his extra-subtleties, was out when he thought I put Mr. Gifford's epitaph on his servant into "The Examiner," with a view to that end. The coincidence was curious, I admit; but it was nothing more. The epitaph was sent me, as things favourable to others of the opposite party had been sent me before, with a recommendation of it to my attention, and a plain hint, that my credit for impartiality was concerned in the manner in which I should treat it. It is well known, and has been sometimes lamented (by Mr. Hazlitt among others,) that the liberal side of politics piqued itself upon the greater degree of generosity with which it could afford to speak of its enemies, and do justice to what is thought meritorious in them. I may add, that, "The Examiner" was foremost in the display of this piece of knight-errantry; that it always spoke of Napoleon as a great man, though it held him up as a betrayer of the cause of freedom; that it was among the foremost to hail Sir Walter Scott as a novelist, though it thought little of him as a poet, and scornfully as a politician; and that at one time it was almost exclusive as a journal, in its admiration of the poetical genius of Wordsworth, of whom it nevertheless felt ashamed as a renegado. Lord Byron used to accuse

me of making a diversion on the town in favour of Wordsworth; and I have reason to believe, that the poet himself was not without an opinion to the same effect. All I mean to say is, that had the epitaph written by Mr. Gifford come before me at any time, it would have met with the same reception, because I thought well of it. That I was not sorry at the coincidence, (which is possible) I cannot pretend to acknowledge, because I have no recollection of the kind; but I confess, that had I known as much of the impulses of weak men at that time as I do now, I would not have incurred, by publishing the epitaph, a greater portion of malignity, than the review was at all events prepared to assail me with. My opinion of Murray's conduct is, that he was glad of the opportunity of showing his impartiality so far with regard to *one* of his publications, as to allow his review to cut it up; and I can easily enough imagine, that Gifford, or whoever the poor fellow was that did cut it up, was the more delighted with his task, in proportion to the sense which he supposed me to entertain of his power. Lord Byron perhaps may have felt piqued at the review on his own account. I forget whether he ever alluded to it. I think not. He condescended, among his other timid deferences to "the town," to be afraid of Gifford. There was an interchange of flatteries between them, not the less subtle for Gifford's occasionally affecting a paternal tone of remonstrance; and they were "friends" to the last; though Lord Byron, (to say nothing of that being a reason also) could not help giving him a secret hit now and then, when the church-and-state review became shy of him. Gifford thought him a wonderful young man, but wild, &c.; and he never forgot that he was a lord. He least of all forgot it, when he affected to play the schoolmaster. On the other hand, Lord Byron was happy to regard Mr. Gifford as a wonderful old gentleman, not indeed a born gentleman, but the more honest in his patricianisms on that account, and quite a born critic; "sound," as the saying is; learned and all that; and full of "good sense;" in short, one that was very sensible of his Lordship's merits, both as a poet and a peer, and who had the art of making his homage to a man of rank agreeable, by affecting independence without really feeling it. Mur-



ray he laughed at. He treated him afterwards, as he did most others, with strange alternations of spleen and good humour, of open panegyric and secret ridicule; but at the period in question, he at least thought him an honest man—for "*the tribe of Barabbas*;" who, said his lordship, "was unquestionably a bookseller." Murray affected to patronize him; and with a simplicity worthy of Dominie Sampson, lamented that a young man with such advantages should go counter in opinion to the King and his ministers; otherwise, said he, who knows but what he might have been made a Viscount "or even an Earl!"\* Mr. Murray once did me the honour, in a stage coach, to make a similar lamentation with regard to myself, all of course in due proportion to my rank and pretensions; but, said he, "There is Leigh Hunt: what does he mean by writing on the side of reform and that kind of thing? what a pity he did not come to us! he might have made his fortune." "Oh but," said a person present, who happened to know me, "his principles were against it." "Principles!" exclaimed Mr. Murray, foregoing his character of Dominie Sampson, and with all the airs of a courtier; "Principles!" as if he had never heard of such things.

The courtiers had the advantage of me in one particular. They knew what it was to admire lords heartily, and they could see that I admired them more than I suspected. I dedicated the "*Story of Rimini*" to Lord Byron, and the dedication was a foolish one. I addressed him, as at the beginning of a letter, and as custom allows in private between friends, without his title; and I proceeded to show how much I thought of his rank, by pretending to think nothing about it. My critics were right so far; but they were wrong in thinking that I would have done it to every lord, and that very romantic feelings were not mixed up with this very childish mistake. I had declined, out of a notion of principle, to avail myself of more than one opportunity of being intimate with men of rank; opportunities which, it will easily be conceived, are no very uncommon things in the life of a journalist. I confess I valued myself a little suspiciously upon my self-denial. In one instance I had

\* I quote on the authority of a Quarterly Reviewer.

reason to do so, for I missed the company of a man of talents. But talents, poetry, similarity of political opinion, the flattery of early sympathy with my boyish writings, more flattering offers of friendship, and the last climax of flattery, an earnest waiving of his rank, were too much for me in the person of Lord Byron; and I took out, with my new friend as I thought him, hearty payment for my philosophical abstinence. Now was the time, I thought, to show, that friendship, and talents, and poetry, were reckoned superior to rank, even by rank itself; my friend appeared not only to allow me to think so, but to encourage me to do it. I took him at his word; and I believe he was as much astonished at it (though nobody could have expressed himself more kindly to me on this subject,\*) as at this present writing I am mortified to record it.

I discovered the absurdity I had committed, long before I went to Italy. On renewing my intercourse with Lord Byron, I made up my mind to put myself on a different footing with him, but in such a manner as he should construe handsomely towards himself, as well as respectfully towards me. I reckoned upon his approval of it, because it should be done as a matter of course, and as the result of a little more experience of the world, and not out of any particular observation of his own wishes or inconsistencies; and I reckoned upon it the more confidently, because at the time that I formed the resolution, his own personal character was not so much in my thoughts as that conventional modification of it which he inherited in common with others of his rank, and of which it was not to be expected he should get rid. Men do not easily give up any advantages they possess, real or imaginary; and they have a good deal to say in their favour,—I mean, as far as any real difference is concerned between what is tangible in substance and tangible in the apprehension. If a man can be made happy with a title, I do not know why we should begrudge it him, or why he should think ill of it, any more than of beauty, or riches, or any thing else that has an influence upon the imagination. The only questions are, whether he will be the better for it in the long run; and whether his par-

\* See the Correspondence.



ticular good is harmless or otherwise with respect to the many. Without stopping to settle this point, I had concluded that Lord Byron had naturally as much regard for his title as any other nobleman; perhaps more, because he had professed not to care about it. Besides he had a poetical imagination. Mr. Shelley, who, though he had not known him longer, had known him more intimately, was punctilious in giving him his title, and told me very plainly that he thought it best for all parties. His oldest acquaintances, it is true, behaved in this respect as it is the custom to behave in great familiarity of intercourse. Mr. Shelley did not choose to be so familiar; and he thought, that although I had acted differently in former times, a long suspension of intercourse would give farther warrant to a change, desirable on many accounts, quite unaffected, and intended to be acceptable. I took care, accordingly, not to accompany my new punctilio with any air of study or gravity. In every other respect, things appeared the same as before. We laughed, and chatted, and rode out, and were as familiar as need be; and I thought he regarded the matter just as I wished. However, he did not like it.

+ This may require some explanation. Lord Byron was very proud of his rank. M. Beyle ("Count Stendhal;") when he saw him at the opera in Venice, made this discovery at a glance; and it was a discovery no less subtle than true. He would appear sometimes as jealous of his title, as if he had usurped it. A friend told me, that an Italian apothecary having sent him one day a packet of medicines, addressed to "Mons. Byron," this mock-heroic mistake aroused his indignation, and he sent back the physic to learn better manners. His coat of arms was fixed up in front of his bed. I have heard that it was a joke with him to mystify the sense of the motto to his fair friend, who wished particularly to know what "Crede Byron" meant. The motto, it must be acknowledged, was awkward. The version, to which her Italian helped her, was too provocative of comment to be allowed. There are mottoes as well as scutcheons, of pretence, which must often occasion the bearers much taunt and sarcasm, especially from indignant ladies. Custom, indeed, and the interested acquiescence of society, enable us to be proud of imputed merits, though we con-

tradict them every day of our life: otherwise it would be wonderful how people could adorn their equipages, and be continually sealing their letters with maxims and stately moralities, ludicrously inapplicable. It would be like wearing ironical papers in their hats.

But Lord Byron, besides being a lord, was a man of letters, and he was extremely desirous of the approbation of men of letters. He loved to enjoy the privileges of his rank, and at the same time to be thought above them. It is true, if he thought you not above them yourself, he was the better pleased. On this account among others, no man was calculated to delight him in a higher degree than Thomas Moore; who with every charm he wished for in a companion, and a reputation for independence and liberal opinions, admired both genius and title for their own sakes. But his lordship did not always feel quite secure of the bon-mots of his brother wit. His conscience had taught him suspicion; and it was a fault with him and his *Coterie*, as it is with most, that they all talked too much of one another behind their back. But "admiration at all events" was his real motto. If he thought you an admirer of titles, he was well pleased that you should add that homage to the other, without investigating it too nicely. If not, he was anxious that you should not suppose him anxious about the matter. When he beheld me, therefore, in the first instance, taking such pains to show my philosophy, he knew very well that he was secure, address him as I might; but now that he found me grown older, and suspected from my general opinions and way of life, that my experience, though it adopted the style of the world when mixing with it, partook less of it than ever in some respects, he was chagrined at this change in my appellatives. He did not feel so at once; but the more we associated, and the greater insight he obtained into the tranquil and unaffected conclusions I had come to on a great many points, upon which he was desirous of being thought as indifferent as myself, the less satisfied he became with it. At last, thinking I had ceased to esteem him, he petulantly bantered me on the subject. I knew, in fact, that, under all the circumstances, neither of us could afford a change back again to the old entire familiarity; he, because he would have regarded it as a

triumph warranting very peculiar consequences, and such as would by no means have saved me from the penalties of the previous offence; and I, because I was under certain disadvantages, that would not allow me to indulge him. With any other man, I would not have stood it out. It would have ill-become the very sincerity of my feelings. But even the genius of Lord Byron did not enable him to afford being conceded to. He was so annoyed one day at Genoa at not succeeding in bantering me out of my epistolary proprieties, that he addressed me a letter beginning, "Dear Lord Hunt." This sally made me laugh heartily. I told him so; and my unequivocal relish of the joke pacified him; so that I heard no more on the subject.

The familiarities of my noble acquaintance, which I had taken at first for a compliment and a cordiality, were dealt out in equal portions to all who came near him. They proceeded upon that royal instinct of an immeasurable distance between the parties, the safety of which, it is thought, can be compromised by no appearance of encouragement. The farther you are off, the more securely the personage may indulge your good opinion of him. The greater his merits, and the more transporting his condescension, the less can you be so immodest as to have pretensions of your own. You may be intoxicated into familiarity. That is excusable, though not desirable. But not to be intoxicated any how,—not to show any levity, and yet not to be possessed with a seriousness of the pleasure, is an offence. When I agreed to go to Italy and join in setting up the proposed work, Shelley, who was fond of giving his friends appellations, happened to be talking one day with Lord Byron of the mystification which the name of "Leigh Hunt" would cause the Italians; and passing from one fancy to another, he proposed that they should translate it into *Leontius*. Lord Byron approved of this conceit, and at Pisa was in the habit of calling me so. I liked it; especially as it seemed a kind of new link with my beloved friend, then, alas! no more. I was pleased to be called in Italy, what he would have called me there had he been alive: and the familiarity was welcome to me from Lord Byron's mouth, partly because it pleased himself, partly because it was not a worldly fashion, and the link with my



friend was thus rendered compatible. In fact, had Lord Byron been what I used to think him, he might have called me what he chose; and I should have been as proud to be at his call, as I endeavoured to be pleased. As it was, there was something not unsocial nor even unenjoying in our intercourse, nor was there any appearance of constraint; but upon the whole, it was not pleasant: it was not cordial. There was a sense of mistake on both sides. However, this came by degrees. At first there was hope, which I tried hard to indulge; and there was always some joking going forward; some melancholy mirth, which a spectator might have taken for pleasure.

Our manner of life was this. Lord Byron, who used to sit up at night, writing *Don Juan* (which he did under the influence of gin and water, (rose late in the morning. He breakfasted; read; lounged about, singing an air, generally out of Rossini, and in a swaggering style, though in a voice at once small and veiled; then took a bath, and was dressed; and coming down stairs, was heard, still singing, in the court-yard, out of which the garden ascended at the back of the house. The servants at the same time brought out two or three chairs. My study, a little room in a corner, with an orange-tree peeping in at the window, looked upon this court-yard. I was generally at my writing when he came down, and either acknowledged his presence by getting up and saying something from the window, or he called out, "*Leontius!*" and came halting up to the window with some joke, or other challenge to conversation. (Readers of good sense will do me the justice of discerning where any thing is spoken of in a tone of objection, and where it is only brought in as requisite to the truth of the picture.) His dress, as at *Monte-Nero*, was a nankin jacket, with white waistcoat and trowsers, and a cap, either velvet or linen, with a shade to it. In his hand was a tobacco-box, from which he helped himself like unto a shipman, but for a different purpose; his object being to restrain the pinguifying impulses of hunger. Perhaps also he thought it good for the teeth. We then lounged about, or sat and talked, *Madame Guiccioli* with her sleek tresses descending after her toilet to join us. The garden was small and square, but plentifully stocked with oranges and other shrubs; and, being well watered, looked very green and



refreshing under the Italian sky. The lady generally attracted us up into it, if we had not been there before. Her appearance might have reminded an English spectator of Chaucer's heroine—

“Yclothed was she, fresh for to devise.  
Her yellow hair was braided in a tress  
Behind her back, a yardè long, I guess :  
And in the garden (as the sun uprist)  
She walketh up and down, where as her list :”

And then, as Dryden has it:

“At every turn she made a little stand,  
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand.”

Madame Guiccioli, who was at that time about twenty, was handsome and lady-like, with an agreeable manner, and a voice not partaking too much of the Italian fervour to be gentle. She had just enough of it to give her speaking a grace. None of her graces appeared entirely free from art; nor, on the other hand, did they betray enough of it to give you an ill opinion of her sincerity and good-humour. I was told, that her Romagnese dialect was observable; but to me, at that time, all Italian in a Lady's mouth was Tuscan Pearl; and she trolled it over her lip, pure or not, with that sort of conscious grace, which seems to belong to the Italian language as a matter of right. I amused her with speaking bad Italian out of Ariosto, and saying *speme* for *speranza*; in which she good-naturedly found something pleasant and *pellegrino*; keeping all the while that considerate countenance, for which a foreigner has so much reason to be grateful. Her hair was what the poet has described, or rather *blond*, with an inclination to yellow; a very fair and delicate yellow at all events, and within the limits of the poetical. She had regular features, of the order properly called handsome, in distinction to prettiness or to piquancy; being well proportioned to one another, large rather than otherwise, but without coarseness, and more harmonious than interesting. Her nose was the handsomest of the kind I ever saw; and I have known her both smile very sweetly, and look intelligently; when Lord Byron has said something kind to her. I should not say, however, that she was a very

intelligent person. Both her wisdom and her want of wisdom were on the side of her feelings, in which there was doubtless mingled a good deal of the self-love natural to a flattered beauty. She wrote letters in the style of the "Academy of Compliments;" and made plentiful use, at all times, of those substitutes of address and discourse, which flourished in England at the era of that polite compilation, and are still in full bloom in Italy.

"And evermore  
She strewed a *mi rallegra* after and before."

In one word, Madam Guiccioli was a kind of buxom parlour-boarder, compressing herself artificially into dignity and elegance, and fancying she walked, in the eyes of the whole world, a heroine by the side of a poet. When I saw her at Monte-Nero, she was in a state of excitement and exaltation, and had really something of this look. At that time also she looked no older than she was; in which respect a rapid and very singular change took place, to the surprise of every body. In the course of a few months she seemed to have lived as many years. It was most likely in that interval that she discovered she had no real hold on the affections of her companion. The portrait of her by Mr. West,

"In Magdalen's loose hair and lifted eye,"

is flattering upon the whole; has a look of greater delicacy than she possessed; but it is also very like, and the studied pretension of the attitude has a moral resemblance. Being a half-length, it shows her to advantage; for the fault of her person was, that her head and bust were hardly sustained by limbs of sufficient length. I take her to have been a good-hearted zealous person, capable of being very natural if she had been thrown into natural circumstances, and able to show a companion, whom she was proud of, that good-humoured and grateful attachment, which the most brilliant men, if they were wise enough, would be as happy to secure, as a corner in Elysium. But the greater and more selfish the vanity, the less will it tolerate the smallest portion of it in another. Lord Byron saw, in the attachment of any female, nothing but what the whole sex were prepared to entertain

for him; and instead of allowing himself to love and be beloved for the qualities which can only be realised upon intimacy, and which are the only securers at last of all attachment, whether for the illustrious or the obscure, he gave up his comfort, out of a wretched compliment to his self-love. He enabled this adoring sex to discover, that a great man might be a very small one. It must be owned, however, as the reader will see presently, that Madame Guiccioli did not in the least know how to manage him, when he was wrong.

The effect of these and the other faults in his Lordship's character was similar, in its proportion, upon all who chanced to come within his sphere. Let the reader present to his imagination the noble poet and any intimate acquaintance (not a mere man of the world) living together. He must fancy them, by very speedy degrees, doubting and differing with one another, how quietly soever, and producing such a painful sense of something not to be esteemed on one side, and something tormented between the wish not to show it and the impossibility of not feeling it on the other, that separation becomes inevitable. It has been said in a magazine, that I was always arguing with Lord Byron. Nothing can be more untrue. I was indeed almost always differing, and to such a degree, that I was fain to keep the difference to myself. I differed so much, that I argued as little as possible. His Lordship was so poor a logician, that he did not even provoke argument. When you openly differed with him, in any thing like a zealous manner, the provocation was caused by something foreign to reasoning, and not pretending to it. He did not care for argument, and what is worse, was too easily convinced at the moment, nor appeared to be so, to give any zest to disputation. He gravely asked me one day, "What it was that convinced me in argument?" I said, I thought I was convinced by the strongest reasoning. "For my part," said he, "it is the last speaker that convinces me." And I believe he spoke truly; but then he was only convinced, till it was agreeable to him to be moved otherwise. He did not care for the truth. He admired only the convenient, and the ornamental. He was moved to and fro, not because there was any ultimate purpose which he would give up, but solely because it was most



troublesome to him to sit still and resist. "Mobility," he has said, in one of his notes to "Don Juan," was his weakness; and he calls it "a very painful attribute." It is an attribute certainly not very godlike; but it still left him as self-centred and unsympathising with his movers, as if he had been a statue or a ball. In this respect, he was as *totus teres atque rotundus*, as Mr. Hazlitt could desire; and thus it was, that he was rolled out of Mr. Hazlitt's own company and the Liberal.

I shall come to that matter presently. Meanwhile, to return to our mode of life. In the course of an hour or two, being an early riser, I used to go in to dinner. Lord Byron either staid a little longer, or went up stairs to his books and his couch. When the heat of the day declined, we rode out, either on horseback or in a barouche, generally towards the forest. He was a good rider, graceful, and kept a firm seat. He loved to be told of it; and being true, it was a pleasure to tell him. Good God! what homage might not that man have received, and what love and pleasure reciprocated, if he could have been content with the truth, and had truth enough of his own to think a little better of his fellow creatures! But he was always seeking for uneasy sources of satisfaction. The first day we were going out on horseback together, he was joking upon the bad riding of this and that acquaintance of his. He evidently hoped to have the pleasure of adding me to the list; and finding, when we pushed forward, that there was nothing particular in the spectacle of my horsemanship, he said in a tone of disappointment, "Why, Hunt, you ride very well!" Trelawney sometimes went with us, on a great horse, smoking a cigar. We had blue frock-coats, white waistcoats and trowsers, and velvet caps *à la Raphael*; and cut a gallant figure. Sometimes we went as far as a vineyard, where he had been accustomed to shoot at a mark, and where the brunette lived, who came into his drawing-room with the basket of flowers. The father was an honest-looking man, who was in trouble with his landlord, and heaved great sighs; the mother a loud swarthy woman, with hard lines in her face. There was a little sister, delicate-looking and melancholy, very different from the confident though not unpleasing countenance of the elder, who was more handsome. They all, however, seemed good-humoured. We sat under



an arbour, and had figs served up to us, the mother being loud in our faces, and cutting some extraordinary jokes, which made me any thing but merry. Upon the whole, I was glad to come away.

Madame Guiccioli was very curious on these occasions, but could get no information. Unfortunately, she could not see beyond a common-place of any sort, nor put up with a distressing one in the hope of doing it away. The worst thing she did (and which showed to every body else, though not to herself, that she entertained no real love for Lord Byron) was to indulge in vehement complaints of him to his acquaintances. The first time she did so to me, I shocked her so excessively with endeavouring to pay a compliment to her understanding, and leading her into a more generous policy, that she never made me her confidant again. "No wonder," she, said "that my Lord was so bad, when he had friends who could talk so shockingly." "Oh, Shelley?" thought I, "see what your friend has come to with the sentimental Italian whom he was to assist in reforming our Don Juan!" When Lord Byron talked freely to her before others, she was not affected by what would have startled a delicate Englishwoman, (a common Italian defect,) but when he alluded to any thing more pardonable, she would get angry, and remonstrate, and "wonder at him;" he all the while looking as if he enjoyed her vehemence, and did not believe a word of it. A delicate lover would have spared her this, and at the same time have elevated her notions of the behaviour suitable for such occasions; but her own understanding did not inform her any better; and in this respect I doubt whether Lord Byron's could have supplied it; what is called sentiment having been so completely taken out of him by ill company and the world.

Of an evening I seldom saw him. He recreated himself in the balcony, or with a book; and at night, when I went to bed, he was just thinking of setting to work with Don Juan. His favourite reading was history and travels. I think I am correct in saying that his favourite authors were Bayle and Gibbon. Gibbon was altogether a writer calculated to please him. There was a show in him, and at the same time a tone of the world, a self-complacency and a sarcasm, a love of things aristocratical with a tendency to be liberal on other points

of opinion; and to crown all, a splendid success in authorship, and a high and piquant character with the fashionable world, which found a strong sympathy in the bosom of his noble reader. Then, in his private life, Gibbon was a voluptuous recluse; he had given celebrity to a foreign residence, possessed a due sense of the merits of wealth as well as rank, and last, perhaps not least, was no speaker in Parliament. I may add, that the elaborate style of his writing pleased the lover of the artificial in poetry, while the cynical turn of his satire amused the genius of Don Juan. And finally, his learning and research supplied the indolent man of letters with the information which he had left at school.

Lord Byron's collection of books was poor, and consisted chiefly of new ones. I remember little among them but the English works published at Basle, (Kames, Robertson, Watson's History of Philip II. &c.) and new ones occasionally sent him from England. He was anxious to show you that he possessed no Shakspeare and Milton; "because," he said, "he had been accused of borrowing from them!" He affected to doubt whether Shakspeare was so great a genius as he has been taken for, and whether fashion had not a great deal to do with it; an extravagance, of which none but a patrician author could have been guilty. However, there was a greater committal of himself at the bottom of this notion than he supposed; and, perhaps, circumstances had really disenabled him from having the proper idea of Shakspeare, though it could not have fallen so short of the truth as he pretended. Spenser he could not read; at least he said so. All the gusto of that most poetical of the poets went with him for nothing. I lent him a volume of the "Fairy Queen," and he said he would try to like it. Next day he brought it to my study-window, and said, "Here, Hunt, here is your Spenser. I cannot see any thing in him:" and he seemed anxious that I should take it out of his hands, as if he was afraid of being accused of copying so poor a writer. That he saw nothing in Spenser is not very likely; but I really do not think that he saw much. Spenser was too much out of the world, and he too much in it. It would have been impossible to persuade him, that Sandy's Ovid was better than Addison's and Croxall's.

He wanted faith in the interior of poetry, to relish it, unpruned and unpopular. Besides, he himself was to be mixed up somehow with every thing, whether to approve it or disapprove. When he found Sandys's *Ovid* among my books, he said, "God! what an unpleasant recollection I have of this book! I met with it on my wedding-day; I read it while I was waiting to go to church." Sandys, who is any thing but an anti-bridal poet, was thenceforward to be nobody but an old fellow who had given him an unpleasant sensation. The only great writer of pastimes, whom he read with avowed satisfaction, was Montaigne, as the reader may see by an article in the "*New Monthly Magazine*." In the same article may be seen the reason why, and the passages that he marked in that author. Franklin he liked. He respected him for his acquisition of wealth and power; and would have stood in awe, had he known him, of the refined worldliness of his character, and the influence it gave him. Franklin's works, and Walter Scott's, were among his favourite reading. His liking for such of the modern authors as he preferred in general, was not founded in a compliment to them; but Walter Scott, with his novels, his fashionable repute, and his ill opinion of the world whom he fell in with, enabled him to enter heartily into his merits; and he read him over and over again, with unaffected delight. Sir Walter was his correspondent, and appears to have returned the regard; though, if I remember, the dedication of "*The Mystery*" frightened him. They did not hold each other in the less estimation, the one for being a lord, and the other a lover of lords: neither did Sir Walter's connexion with the calumniating press of Edinburgh at all shock his noble friend. It added rather "a fearful joy" to his esteem; carrying with it a look of something "bloody, bold, and resolute:" at the same time, more resolute and bold, and more death-dealing than either;—a sort of available other-man's weapon, which increased the sum of his power, and was a set-off against his character for virtue.

The first number of the *Liberal* was now on the anvil, and Mr. Shelley's death had given me a new uneasiness. The reader will see in Mr. Shelley's *Letters*, that Lord Byron had originally proposed a work of



the kind to Mr. Moore; at least, a periodical work of some sort, which they were jointly to write. Mr. Moore doubted the beatitude of such divided light, and declined it. His Lordship then proposed it through Mr. Shelley to me. I wrote to both of them to say, that I should be happy to take such an opportunity of restoring the fortunes of a battered race of patriots: and as soon as we met in Pisa, it was agreed that the work should be political, and assist in carrying on the good cause. The title of *Liberal* was given it by Lord Byron. We were to share equally the profits, the work being printed and published by my brother; and it was confidently anticipated that money would pour in upon all of us.

Enemies, however, had been already at work. Lord Byron was alarmed for his credit with his fashionable friends; among whom, although on the liberal side, patriotism was less in favour, than the talk about it. This man wrote to him, and that wrote; and another came. Mr. Hobhouse rushed over the Alps, not knowing which was the more awful, the mountains, or the Magazine. Mr. Murray wondered, Mr. Gifford smiled, (a lofty symptom!) and Mr. Moore (*tu quoque*; *Horati*!) said that the *Liberal* had "a taint" in it! This however was afterwards. But Lord Byron, who was as fond as a footman of communicating unpleasant intelligence, told us from the first, that his "friends" had all been at him; friends, whom he afterwards told me he had "libelled all round" and whom (to judge of what he did by some of them) he continued to treat in the same impartial manner. He surprised my friend, Mr. Brown, at Pisa, by volunteering a gossip on this matter, in the course of which he drew a comparison between me and one of his "friends," to whom, he said, he had been accused of preferring me; "and," added he, with an air of warmth, "so I do." The meaning of this was, that the person in question was out of favour at the moment, and I was in. Next day the tables may have been turned. I met Mr. Hobhouse soon after in the Casa Lanfranchi. He was very polite and complimentary; and then, if his noble friend was to be believed, did all he could to destroy the connexion between us. One of the arguments used by the remonstrants with his Lordship was, that the connexion was not "gentlemanly;" a re-



presentation which he professed to treat with great scorn, whether birth or manners were concerned; and I will add, that he had reason to do so. It was a ridiculous assumption, which, like all things of that sort, was to tell upon the mere strength of its being one. The manners of such of his Lordship's friends as I ever happened to meet with, were, in fact, with one exception, nothing superior to their birth, if two such unequal things may be put on a level. It is remarkable (and, indeed, may account for the cry about gentility, which none are so given to as the vulgar,) that they were almost all persons of humble origin; one of a race of booksellers; another the son of a grocer; another, of a glazier; and a fourth, though the son of a baronet, the grandson of a linen-draper. Readers who know any thing of me, or such as I care to be known by, will not suspect me of undervaluing tradesmen or the sons of tradesmen, who may be, and very often are, both as gentlemanly and accomplished as any men in England. It did not require the Frenchman's discovery, (that, at a certain remove, every body is related to every body else,) to make a man think sensibly on this point now-a-days. Pope was a linen-draper's son, and Cowley a grocer's. Who would be coxcomb enough to venture to think the worse on that account of either of those illustrious men, whether for wit or gentility; and both were gentlemen as well as wits. But when persons bring a charge upon things indifferent, which, if it attaches at all, attaches to none but themselves who make it, the thing indifferent becomes a thing ridiculous. Mr. Shelley, a baronet's son, was also of an old family: and, as to his manners, though they were in general those of a recluse, and of an invalid occupied with his thoughts, they were any thing but vulgar. They could be, if he pleased, in the most received style of his rank. He was not incapable, when pestered with moral vulgarity, of assuming even an air of aristocratic pride and remoteness. Some of Lord Byron's friends would have given him occasion for this twenty times in a day. They did wisely to keep out of his way. As to my birth, the reader may see what it was in another part of the volume; and my manners I leave him to construe kindly or otherwise, according to his own.

There is nothing on the part of others, from which I have suffered so much in the course of my life, as reserve and disingenuousness. Had Lord Byron, incontinent in every thing else, told me at once, that in case it did not bring him an influx of wealth, he could not find it in his heart to persist in what was objected to by a *côterie* on the town,—or had his friends, whom he “libelled all round,” and some of whom returned him the compliment, been capable of paying me or themselves the compliment of being a little sincere with me, and showing me any reasons for supposing that the work would be injurious to Lord Byron (for I will imagine, for the sake of argument, that such might have been the case,) I should have put an end to the design at once. As it was, though his Lordship gave in before long, and had undoubtedly made up his mind to do so long before he announced it, yet not only did the immediate influence prevail at first over the remoter one, but it is a mistake to suppose that he was not mainly influenced by the expectation of profit. He expected very large returns from “The Liberal.” Readers in these days need not be told that periodical works, which have a large sale, are a mine of wealth. Lord Byron had calculated that matter well; and when it is added, that he loved money, adored notoriety, and naturally entertained a high opinion of the effect of any new kind of writing which he should take in hand, nobody will believe it probable (nobody who knew him will believe it possible) that he should voluntarily contemplate the rejection of profits which he had agreed to receive. He would have beheld in them the most delightful of all proofs, that his reputation was not on the wane. For here, after all, lay the great secret, both of what he did and what he did not do. He was subject, it is true, to a number of weak impulses; would agree to this thing, and propose another, purely out of incontinence of will; and offer to do one day what he would bite his fingers off to get rid of the next. But this plan of a periodical publication was no sudden business; he had proposed it more than once, and to different persons; and his reasons for it were, that he thought he should get both money and fame. A pique with “The Quarterly Review,” and his Tory admirers, roused his regard for the opposite side of the

question. He thought to do himself good, and chagrin his critics, by assisting an enemy. The natural Toryism of some pretended lovers of liberty first alarmed him by a hint, that he might possibly not succeed. He supported his resolution by the hopes I have just mentioned, and even tried to encourage himself into a pique with his friends; but the failure of the large profits—the non-appearance of the golden visions he had looked for,—of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Returns,—of the solid and splendid proofs of this new country which he should conquer in the regions of notoriety, to the dazzling of all men's eyes and his own,—this it was, this was the bitter disappointment which made him determine to give way, and which ultimately assisted in carrying him as far as Greece, in the hope of another redemption of his honours. From the moment he saw the moderate profits of "The Liberal," (quite enough to encourage perseverance, if he had had it, but not in the midst of a hundred wounded vanities and inordinate hopes,) he resolved to have nothing farther to do with it in the way of real assistance. He made use of it only for the publication of some things which his Tory bookseller was afraid to put forth. Indeed, he began with a contribution of that sort; but then he thought it would carry every thing before it. It also enabled him to make a pretence, with his friends, of doing as little as possible; while he secretly indulged himself in opposition both to them and his enemies. It failed; and he then made an instrument of the magazine, in such a manner as to indulge his own spleen, and maintain an appearance of co-operation, while in reality he did nothing for it but hasten its downfall.

There was undoubtedly other causes which conspired to this end; but they were of minor importance, and would gradually have been done away, had he possessed spirit and independence enough to persevere. It was thought that Mr. Shelley's co-operation would have hurt the magazine; and so it might in a degree; till the public became too much interested to object to it; but Mr. Shelley was dead, and people were already beginning to hear good of him, and to like him. *Extinctus amabitur.* I myself, however, who was expected to write a good deal, and probably to be inspired beyond myself by the delight and grandeur of my position, was in



very bad health, and as little conscious of delight and grandeur as possible. I had been used to write under trying circumstances; but latterly I had been scarcely able to write at all; and at the time I never felt more oppressed in my life with a sense of what was to be done. Then the publisher was a much better patriot than man of business: he was also new to his work as a bookseller; and the trade (who can do more in these matters than people are aware of) set their faces against him; particularly Lord Byron's old publisher, who was jealous and in a frenzy. To crown all, an article (the "Vision of Judgment") was sent my brother for insertion, which would have frightened any other publisher, or at least set him upon garbling and making stars. My brother saw nothing in it but Lord Byron, and a prodigious hit at the Tories; and he prepared his machine accordingly for sending forward the blow unmitigated. Unfortunately it recoiled, and played the devil with all of us. I confess, for my part, having been let a little more into the interior of these matters, that had I seen the article, before it was published, I should have advised against the appearance of certain passages; but Lord Byron had no copy in Italy. It was sent, by his direction, straight from Mr. Murray to the publisher's; and the first time I beheld it, was in the work that I edited.

The first number of "The Liberal" got us a great number of enemies, some of a nature which we would rather have had on our side; a great many because they felt their self-love wounded as authors; and more out of a national prejudice. The prejudice is not so strong as it was upon the particular subject alluded to; but it is the least likely to wear out, because the national vanity is concerned in it, and it can only be conquered by an admission of defects. What renders the case more inveterate is, that none partake of it more strongly than the most violent of its opponents. In addition to the scandal excited by the "Vision of Judgment," there was the untimely seasonableness of the epigrams upon poor Lord Castlereagh. Lord Byron wrote them. They arose from the impulse of the moment; were intended for a newspaper, and in that more fugitive medium, would have made a comparatively fugitive impression.



Arrested in a magazine, they were kept longer before the eyes of the public, and what might have been pardon-ed as an impulse, was regarded with horror as a thing deliberate. Politicians in earnest, and politicians not in earnest, were mortified by the preface; all the real or pretended orthodox, who can admire a startling poem from a state-minister (Goethe,) were vexed to see that Mr. Shelley could translate it; and all the pretenders in literature were vexed by the attack upon Hoole, and the article headed "Rhyme and Reason;" in which latter, I fear, even a wit, whom I could name, was capable of finding an ill intention. I began to think so when I heard of his criticisms, and saw his next poem. But the "Vision of Judgment," with which none of the articles were to be compared, and which, in truth, is the best piece of satire Lord Byron ever put forth, was grudged us the more, and roused greater hostility on that account. Envy of the silliest kind, and from the silliest people, such as it is really degrading to be the object of, pursued us at every turn; and when Mr. Hazlitt joined us, alarm as well as envy was at its height. After all, perhaps, there was nothing that vexed these people, more than their inability to discover which were Lord Byron's articles, and which not. It betrayed a secret in the shallows of criticism, even to themselves, and was not to be forgiven. The work struggled on for a time, and then, owing partly to private circumstances, which I had explained in my first writing of these pages, but which it has become unnecessary to record, was quietly dropped. I shall only mention, that Lord Byron, after the failure of the "great profits," had declared his intention of receiving nothing from the work till it produced a certain sum; and that I unexpectedly turned out to be in the receipt of the whole profits of the proprietorship, which I regarded, but too truly, as one of a very ominous description. All which publicly concerns the origin and downfall of the Magazine the readers are acquainted with, excepting perhaps the political pique which Mr. Hobhouse may have felt against us, and the critical one which has been attributed to Mr. Moore. Mr. Hazlitt is supposed to have had his share in the offence; and certainly, as far as writing in the work was concerned, he gave stronger reasons for it than I could do. But he shall speak for

himself in a note, at the hazard of blowing up my less gunpowder text.\* Mr. Hobhouse was once called upon by the electors of Westminster for an explicit statement

\* "As to the time," says Mr. Hazlitt, "that Lord Byron thought proper to join with Mr. Leigh Hunt and Mr. Shelley in the publication called *The Liberal*, Blackwood's Magazine overflowed, as might be expected, with tenfold gall and bitterness; the John Bull was outrageous, and Mr. ——— black in the face, at this unheard-of and disgraceful union. But who would have supposed that Mr. Thomas Moore and Mr. Hobhouse, those staunch friends and partisans of the people, should also be thrown into almost hysterical agonies of well-bred horror at the coalition between their noble and ignoble acquaintance—between the patrician and 'the newspaper man?' Mr. Moore darted backwards and forwards from Cold-Bath-Fields Prison to the Examiner office, from Mr. Longman's to Mr. Murray's shop in a state of ridiculous trepidation, to see what was to be done to prevent this degradation of the aristocracy of letters, this indecent encroachment of plebeian pretensions, this undue extension of patronage and compromise of privilege. The Tories were shocked that Lord Byron should grace the popular side by his direct countenance and assistance; the Whigs were shocked that he should share his confidence and counsels with any one who did not unite the double recommendations of birth and genius—but themselves! Mr. Moore had lived so long among the great, that he fancied himself one of them, and regarded the indignity as done to himself. Mr. Hobhouse had lately been black-balled by the Clubs, and must feel particularly sore and tenacious on the score of public opinion. Mr. Shelley's father, however, was an older baronet than Mr. Hobhouse's; Mr. Leigh Hunt was 'to the full as genteel a man' as Mr. Moore, in birth, appearance and education; the pursuits of all four were the same—the Muse, the public favour, and the public good. Mr. Moore was himself invited to assist in the undertaking, but he professed an utter aversion to, and warned Lord Byron against, having any concern with *joint publications*, as of a very neutralizing and levelling description. He might speak from experience. He had tried his hand in that Ulysses' bow of critics and politicians, the *Edinburgh Review*, though his secret had never transpired. Mr. Hobhouse, too, had written *Illustrations of a Childe Harold* (a sort of partnership concern)—yet, to quash the publication of *The Liberal*, he seriously proposed that his noble friend should write once a-week, *in his own name*, in the Examiner. The Liberal scheme, he was afraid, might succeed; the newspaper one he knew could not. I have been whispered, that the member for Westminster (for whom I once gave an ineffectual vote) has also conceived some distaste for me—I do not know why, except that I was at one time named as the writer of the famous Trecenti Juravimus Letter to Mr. Canning, which appeared in the Examiner, and was afterwards suppressed. He might feel the disgrace of such a supposition: I confess I did not feel the honour. The cabal, the bustle, the significant hints, the confidential rumours were at the height, when, after Mr. Shelley's death, I was invited to take a part in this obnoxious publication (obnoxious alike to friend and foe;) and when the *Essay on the Spirit of Monarchy* appeared, (which must indeed have operated like a bomb-shell thrown into the coteries that Mr. Moore frequented, as well as those that he had left,) this gentleman wrote off to Lord

of his opinions on the subject of reform. He gave a statement which was thought not to be explicit, or even intelligible; and I had the misfortune, in "The Examiner," to be compelled to say that I was among the number

Byron, to say that, 'there was a taint in The Liberal, and that he should lose no time in getting out of it.' And this, from Mr. Moore to Lord Byron—the last of whom had just involved the publication, against which he was cautioned as having a taint in it, in a prosecution for libel by his *Vision of Judgment*, and the first of whom had scarcely written any thing all his life that had not a taint in it. It is true, the Holland-house party might be somewhat staggered by a *jeu-d'esprit* that set their Blackstone and De Lolme theories at defiance, and that they could as little write as answer. But it was not that. Mr. Moore also complained that 'I had spoken against Lalla Rookh,' though he had just before sent me his 'Fudge Family.' Still it was not that. But at the time he sent me that very delightful and spirited publication, my little bark was seen 'hulling on the flood,' in a kind of dubious twilight, and it was not known whether I might not prove a vessel of gallant trim. Mr. Blackwood had not then directed his Grub-street battery against me; but as soon as this was the case, Mr. Moore was willing to "whistle me down the wind and let me prey at fortune;" not that I "proved haggard," but the contrary. It is sheer cowardice and want of heart. The sole object of the rest is not to stem the tide of prejudice and falsehood, but to get out of the way themselves. The instant another is assailed (however unjustly,) instead of standing manfully by him, they *cut* the connexion as fast as possible, and sanction by their silence and reserve the accusations they ought to repel. *Sauve qui peut*—every one has enough to do to look after his own reputation or safety without rescuing a friend or proping up a falling cause. It is only by keeping in the background on such occasions (like Gil Blas, when his friend Ambrose Lamela was led by in triumph to the *auto-da-fe*) that they can escape the like honours and a summary punishment. A shower of mud, a flight of nicknames (glancing a little out of their original direction) might obscure the last glimpse of royal favour, or stop the last gasp of popularity. Nor could they answer it to their noble friends and more elegant pursuits, to be received in such company, or to have their names coupled with similar outrages. Their sleek, glossy, aspiring pretensions should not be exposed to vulgar contamination, or to be trodden under foot of a swinish multitude. Their birth-day suits (unused) should not be dragged through the kennel, nor their "tricksy" laurel wreaths stuck in the pillory. This would make them equally unfit to be taken into the palaces or the carriages of peers. If excluded from both, what would become of them? The only way, therefore, to avoid being implicated in the abuse poured upon others, is to pretend that it is just—the way not to be made the object of the *hue and cry* raised against a friend, is to aid it by underhand whispers. It is pleasant neither to participate in disgrace nor to have honours divided. The more Lord Byron confined his intimacy and friendship to a few persons of middling rank, but of extraordinary merit, the more it must redound to his and their credit. The lines of Pope,

"To view with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
And haste for arts which caused himself to rise,"—



of the dull perceptions. A few days afterwards, meeting him in St. James's-street, he said he wondered at my coming to that conclusion, and asked me how it could happen. I did not enter into the origin of the phenomenon, but said that I could not help it, and that the statement did appear to me singularly obscure. Since that time, I believe, I never saw him till we met in the Casa Lanfranchi. As to Mr. Moore, he did not relish, I know, the objection which I had made to the style of "Lalla Rookh;" but then he had told me so; he encouraged me to speak freely; he had spoken freely himself; and I felt all the admiration of him, if not of his poem, which candour, in addition to wit, can excite. I never suspected that he would make this a ground of quarrel with me in after-times; nor do I now wish to give more strength to Lord Byron's way of representing things on this point than on any other. There may be as little foundation for his reporting that Mr. Moore would never forgive Hazlett for saying that he "ought not to have written 'Lalla Rookh,' even for three thousand guineas;" a condemnation which, especially with the context that follows it, involves a compliment in its very excess.\* But Mr.

might still find a copy in the breast of more than one scribbler of politics and fashion. Mr. Moore might not think without a pang of the author of "Rimini," sitting at his ease with the author of "Childe Harold;" Mr. Hobhouse might be averse to see my dogged prose bound up in the same volume with his Lordship's splendid verse; and assuredly it would not facilitate his admission to the Clubs, that his friend Lord Byron had taken the Editor of "The Examiner" by the hand, and that their common friend, Mr. Moore, had taken no active steps to prevent it!"—*Plain Speaker*, vol. ii. p. 437.

\* "Mr. Moore ought not to have written 'Lalla Rookh,' even for three thousand guineas. His fame is worth more than that. He should have minded the advice of Fadladeen. It is not, however, a failure, so much as an evasion and a consequent disappointment of public expectation. He should have left it to others to break conventions with nations, and faith with the world. He should, at any rate, have kept his with the public. "Lalla Rookh" is nor what people wanted to see whether Mr. Moore could do; namely, whether he could write a long epic poem. It is four short tales. The interest, however, is often high-wrought and tragic, but the execution still turns to the effeminate and voluptuous side. Fortitude of mind is the first requisite of a tragic or epic writer. Happiness of nature and felicity of genius are the pre-eminent characteristics of the bard of Erin. If he is not perfectly contented with what he is, all the world beside is. He had no temptation to risk any thing in adding to the love and admiration of his age, and more than one country."—*Lectures on the English Poets*, p. 301.



Moore was not candid, when he wrote secretly to Lord Byron, to induce him to give up the Magazine; and to tell him, there was "a taint" in it. He says he ought to have recollected, that Lord Byron always showed the letters that were written to him. This regret he has expressed to a mutual friend; but I do not see how it mends the matter. And what did he mean by "a taint?" Was it a taint of love—(very loth am I to put two such words together, but it is for him to explain the inconsistency)—Was it a taint of love, or of libel? or of infidelity? or of independence? And was the taint the greater, because the independence was true? Yes, Mr. Hazlitt has explained that matter but too well.

Towards the end of September, Lord Byron and myself, in different parties, left Pisa for Genoa. He was restless, as he had always been; Tuscany was uncomfortable to him; and at Genoa he would hover on the borders of his inclination for Greece. Perhaps he had already made arrangements for going there. We met at Lerici on our way. He had an illness at that place; and all my melancholy was put to its height by seeing the spot my departed friend had lived in, and his solitary mansion on the sea-shore. The place is wild and retired, with a bay and rocky eminences; the people suited to it something between inhabitants of sea and land. In the summer-time they will be up all night, dabbling in the water, and making wild noises. Here Mr. Trevelaney joined us. He took me to the Villa Magni (the house just alluded to;) and we paced over its empty rooms, and neglected garden. The sea fawned upon the shore, as though it could do no harm.

At Lerici we had an earthquake. It was the strongest we experienced in Italy. At Pisa there had been a dull intimation of one, such as happens in that city about once in three years. In the neighbourhood of Florence we had another, pretty smart of its kind, but lasting only for an instant. It was exactly as if somebody with a strong hand had jerked a pole up against the ceiling of the lower room, right under one's feet. This was at Maiano among the Fiesolan hills. People came out of their rooms, and inquired of one another what was the matter; so that it was no delusion. At Lerici nobody could have mistaken. I was awakened

at dawn with an extraordinary sensation, and directly afterwards the earthquake took place. It was strong enough to shake the pictures on the wall; and it lasted a sufficient time to resemble the rolling of a wagon under an archway, which it did both in noise and movement. I got up, and went to the window. The people were already collecting in the open place beneath it: and I heard, in the clear morning air, the word *Terremoto* repeated from one to another. The sensation for the next ten minutes or quarter of an hour, was very great. You expected the shock to come again, and to be worse; However, we had no more of it. We congratulated ourselves the more, because there was a tower on a rock just over our heads, which would have stood upon no ceremony with our inn. They told us, if I remember, that they had an earthquake on this part of the coast of Italy, about once every five years. Italy is a land of volcanoes, more or less subdued. It is a great grapery, built over a flue.

From Lerici, we proceeded part of our way by water, as far as Sestri. Lord Byron and Madame Guiccioli went in a private boat; Mr. Trelawney in another; and myself and family in a felucca. It was pretty to see the boats with their white sails, gliding by the rocks, over that blue sea. A little breeze coming on our gallant seaman were afraid, and put into Porto Venere, a deserted town a short distance from Lerici. I asked them if they really meant to put in, upon which they looked very determined on that point, and said, that "Englishmen had no sense of danger." I smiled internally to think of the British channel. I thought also of the thunder and lightning in this very sea, where they might have seen British tars themselves astonished with fear. In Italy, Englishmen are called "the mad English," from the hazards they run. They like to astonish the natives by a little superfluous peril. If you see a man coming furiously down the street on horseback, you may be pretty certain he is an Englishman. An English mail-coach, with that cauliflower of human beings a top of it, lumping from side to side, would make the hearts of a Tuscan city die within them.

Porto Venere is like a petrified town in a story-book.

The classical name took us, and we roamed over it. It was curious to pass the houses one after the other, and meet not a soul. Such inhabitants as there are, confine themselves to the sea-shore. After resting a few hours, we put forth again, and had a lazy, sunny passage to Sestri, where a crowd of people assailed us, like savages at an island, for our patronage and portmanteaus. They were robust, clamorous, fishy fellows, like so many children of the Tritons in Raphael's pictures; as if those plebeian gods of the sea had been making love to Italian chambermaids. Italian goddesses have shown a taste not unsimilar, and more condescending; and English ones too in Italy, if scandal is to be believed. But Naples is the head-quarters of this overgrowth of wild luxury. Marini, a Neapolitan, may have had it in his eye, when he wrote that fine sonnet of his, full of aboriginal gusto, brawny, and bearded, about Proteus pursuing Cymothoe. (*See Parnaso, Italiano, tom. 41, p. 10.*) Liking every thing real in poetry, I should be tempted to give a specimen; but am afraid of Mr. Moore.

From Sestri we proceeded over the maritime part of the Apennines to Genoa. Their character is of the least interesting sort of any mountains, being neither distinct nor wooded; but barren, savage, and coarse; without any grandeur but what arises from an excess of that appearance. They lie in a succession of great doughy billows, like so much enormous pudding, or petrified mud.

Genoa again! With what different feelings we beheld it the first time! Mrs. Shelley, who preceded us to the city, had found houses both for Lord Byron's family and my own at Albaro, a neighbouring village on a hill. We were to live in the same house with her; and in the Casa Negroto we accordingly found an English welcome. There were forty rooms in it, some of them such as would be considered splendid in England, and all neat and new, with borders and arabesques. The balcony and staircase was of marble, and there was a little flower-garden. The rent of this house was twenty pounds a-year. Lord Byron paid four-and-twenty for his, which was older and more imposing, with rooms in still greater plenty, and a good piece of ground. It was called

The Casa Saluzzi.\* Mr. Landor and his family had occupied a house in the same village—the Casa Pallavicini. He has recorded an interesting dialogue that took place in it.† Of Albaro I have given an account in another work.

The Genoese post brought us the first number of “The Liberal,” accompanied both with hopes and fears, the latter of which were too speedily realized. Living now in a separate house from Lord Byron, I saw less of him than before; and under all the circumstances, it was as well. It was during our residence in this part of Italy, that the remaining numbers of “The Liberal” were published. I did what I could to make him persevere; and have to take shame to myself, that in my anxiety on that point, I persuaded him to send over “The Blues” for insertion, rather than contribute nothing. It is the only thing connected with “The Liberal” that I gave myself occasion to regret. I cannot indeed boast of my communications to it. Illness and unhappiness must be my excuse. They are things under which a man does not always write his worst. They may even supply him with a sort of fevered inspiration; but this was not my case at the time. The only pieces I would save, if I could, from oblivion, out of that work, are the “Rhyme and Reason,” the “Lines to a Spider,” and the copy of verses entitled “Mahmoud.” The little gibe on his native place, out of “Al Hamadani,” might accompany them. I must not omit, that Lord Byron would have put his “Island” in it, and I believe another poem, if I had thought it of use. It would all have been so much dead weight; especially as the readers, not being certain it was contributed by his Lordship, would not have known whether they were to be enraptured or indifferent. By and by he would have taken them out, published them by themselves, and then complained that they would have sold before, if it had not been for “The Liberal.” What he should have done

\* Any relation to “Saluces,” whose “Markis” married the patient Griselda? Saluces was in the maritime Apennines, by Piedmont, and might have originated a family of Genoese nobles. Classical and romantic associations abound so at every turn in Italy, that upon the least hint a book speaketh.

† Imaginary Conversations, Vol. i. p. 179, Second Edition.



for the work was to stand by it openly and manfully, to make it the obvious channel of his junction with the cause of freedom, to contribute to it not his least popular or his least clever productions, but such as the nature of the work should have inspired and recommended, or in default of being able to do this (for perhaps he was not fitted to write for a periodical work) he should have gained all the friends for it he could, not among those whom he "libelled all round," but among thousands of readers all prepared to admire, and love him, and think it an honour to fight under his banner. But he had no real heart in the business, nor for any thing else but a feverish notoriety. It was by this he was to shake at once the great world and the small; the mountain and the mouse; the imaginations of the public, and the approving nod of the "man of wit and fashion about town." Mr. Hazlitt, habitually paradoxical, sometimes pastoral, and never without the self-love which he is fond of discerning in others, believed at the moment that a lord had a liking for him, and that a lord and a sophisticate poet would put up with his sincerities about the aristocratical and the primitive. It begat in him a love for the noble Bard; and I am not sure that he has got rid, to this day, of the notion that it was returned. He was taken in, as others had been, and as all the world chose and delighted to be, as long as the flattering self-reflection was allowed a remnant to act upon. The mirror was pieced at Mis-solonghi, and then they could expatiate at large on the noble lord's image and their own! Sorry cozenage! Poor and melancholy conclusion to come to respecting great as well as little; and such as would be frightful to think of, if human nature, after all, were not better than they pretend. Lord Byron in truth was afraid of Mr. Hazlitt; he admitted him like a courtier, for fear he should be treated by him as an enemy; but when he beheld such articles as the "Spirit of Monarchy," where the "taint" of polite corruption was to be exposed, and the First Acquaintance with Poets, where Mr. Wordsworth was to be exalted above depreciation,

"In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite—"

(for such was Mr. Hazlitt's innocent quotation) his Lordship could only wish him out again, and take pains to

show his polite friends that he had nothing in common with so inconsiderate a plebeian. Mr. Hazlitt is a little too angry with Mr. Moore. He ought to include himself, who undertook to be still more independent of high life, and who can afford better to be mistaken. A person who knew Mr. Moore well, told me, that asking him one day how he should feel, if the King were to offer to make him a baronet, the author of the "Irish Melodies" replied, "Good God! how these people can annihilate us!" I told this answer to Mr. Hazlitt, who justly admired the candour of it. It would have been more admirable, however, if the poet were to omit those innocent scoffs at the admirers of lords and titles, with which he sometimes thinks fit to mystify himself: and the philosopher's admiration of candour would be better, if he were always candid himself, and now and then a little philosophic.

I passed a melancholy time at Albaro, walking about the stony alleys, and thinking of Mr. Shelley. My intercourse with Lord Byron, though less than before, was considerable; and we were always, as the phrase is, "on good terms." He knew what I felt, for I said it. I also knew what he thought, for he said that, "in a manner;" and he was in the habit of giving you a good deal to understand, in what he did not say. In the midst of all his strange conduct, he professed a great personal regard. He would do the most humiliating things, insinuate the bitterest, both of me and my friends, and then affect to do all away with a soft word, protesting that nothing he ever said was meant to apply to myself.

I will take this opportunity of recording some more anecdotes as they occur to me. We used to walk in the grounds of the Casa Saluzzi, talking for the most part of indifferent matters, and endeavouring to joke away the consciousness of our position. We joked even upon our difference of opinion. It was a jest between us, that the only book that was unequivocally a favourite of both sides was Boswell's "Life of Johnson." I used to talk of Johnson when I saw him out of temper, or wished to avoid other subjects. He asked me one day, how I should have felt in Johnson's company. I said it was difficult to judge; because, living in other times and one's character being modified by them, I could not help think-

ing of myself as I was now, and Johnson as he was in times previous: so that it appeared to me that I should have been somewhat Jacobinical in his company, and not disposed to put up with his *ipse dixits*. He said, that "Johnson would have awed him, he treated lords with so much respect." This was better said than it was meant to be, and I have no doubt was very true. Johnson would have made him a bow like a churchwarden; and Lord Byron would have been in a flutter of worshipped acquiescence. He liked to imitate Johnson, and say, "Why, Sir," in a high mouthing way, rising, and looking about him. Yet he hardly seemed to relish Peter Pindar's imitations, excellent as they were. I used to repeat to him those laughable passages out of "Bozzy and Piozzy."

Dear Dr. Johnson,—

(It is Mrs. Thrale who speaks)—

Dear Dr. Johnson was in size an ox,  
And of his uncle Andrew learnt to box,  
A man to wrestlers and to bruisers dear,  
Who kept the ring in Smithfield a whole year.  
The Doctor had an uncle too, ador'd  
By jumping gentry, called Cornelius Ford;  
Who jump'd in boots, which jumpers never choose,  
Far as a famous jumper jump'd in shoes."

See also the next passage in the book—

"At supper rose a dialogue on witches,"

which I would quote also, only I am afraid Mr. Moore would think I was trespassing on the privileges of high life. Again; Madame Piozzi says,

"Once at our house, amidst our Attic feast,  
We liken'd our acquaintances to beasts:  
As for example—some to calves and hogs,  
And some to bears and monkeys, cats, and dogs.

We said, (which charm'd the Doctor much, no doubt,)  
His mind was like, of elephants the snout;  
That could pick pins up, yet possess'd the vigour  
Of trimming well the jacket of a tiger."

*Bozzy.* When Johnson was in Edinburgh, my wife  
To please his palate, studied for her life:  
With ev'ry rarity she fill'd her house,  
And gave the Doctor for his dinner, *grouse*.

*Piozzi.* Dear Doctor Johnson left off drinks fermented,  
With quarts of chocolate and cream contented;

Yet often down his throat's prodigious gutter,  
Poor man! he pour'd whole floods of melted butter."

At these passages, which make me laugh so for the thousandth time that I can hardly write them, Lord Byron had too invincible a relish of a good thing not to laugh also, but he did it uneasily. The cause is left to the reader's speculation.

With the commiseration about the melted butter, we agreed heartily. When Lord Castlereagh killed himself, it was mentioned in the papers that he had taken his usual tea and buttered toast for breakfast. I said there was no knowing how far even so little a thing as buttered toast might not have fatally assisted in exasperating that ill state of stomach, which is found to accompany melancholy. As "the last feather breaks the horse's back so the last injury done to the organs of digestion may make a man kill himself. He agreed with me entirely in this; and said the world were as much in the wrong, in nine cases out of ten, respecting the immediate causes of suicide, as they were in their notions about the harmlessness of this and that food, and the quantity of it.

Like many other wise theorists on this subject, he had wilfully shut his eyes to the practise, though I do not mean to say he was excessive in eating and drinking. He had only been in the habit, latterly, of taking too much for his particular temperament; a fault, in one respect, the most pardonable in those who are most aware of it, the uneasiness of a sedentary stomach tempting them to the very indulgence that is hurtful. I know what it is; and beg, in this, as on other occasions, not to be supposed to imply any thing to my own advantage, when I am upon points that may be construed to the disadvantage of others. But he had got fat, and then went to the other extreme. He came to me one day out of another room, and said, with great glee, "Look here! what do you say to this?" at the same time doubling the lapells of his coat one over the other:—"three months ago," added he, "I could not button it." Sometimes, though rarely, with a desperate payment of his virtue, he would make an outrageous dinner; eating all sorts of things that were unfit for him, and suffering accordingly next day. He once sent to Paris for one of the travelling pies they



make there—things that distribute indigestion by return of post, and cost three or four guineas. Twenty crowns, I think, he gave for it. He tasted and dined. The next day he was fain to make a present of six-eighths of it to an envoy:—"Lord Byron's compliments, and he sends his Excellency a pasty that has seen the world." He did not write this; but this was implied in his compliment. It is to be hoped his Excellency had met the pasty before.

It is a credit to my noble acquaintance, that he was by far the pleasantest when he had got wine in his head. The only time I invited myself to dine with him, I told him I did it on that account, and that I meant to push the bottle so, that he should intoxicate me with his good company. He said he would have a set-to; but he never did it. I believe he was afraid. It was a little before he left Italy; and there was a point in contest between us (not regarding myself,) which he thought perhaps I should persuade him to give up. When in his cups, which was not often, nor immoderately, he was inclined to be tender; but not weakly so, nor lachrymose. I know not how it might have been with every body, but he paid me the compliment of being excited to his very best feelings; and when I rose late to go away, he would hold me down, and say, with a look of entreaty, "Not yet." Then it was that I seemed to talk with the proper natural Byron as he ought to have been; and there was not a sacrifice I could not have made to keep him in that temper; and see his friends love him, as much as the world admired. Next morning it was all gone. His intimacy with the worst part of mankind had got him again in its chilling crust; and nothing remained but to despair and joke.

In his wine he would volunteer an imitation of somebody, generally of Incledon. He was not a good mimic in the detail; but he could give a lively broad sketch; and over his cups his imitations were good-natured which was seldom the case at other times. His Incledon was vocal. I made pretensions to the oratorical part; and between us, we boasted that we made up the entire phenomenon. Mr. Mathews would have found it defective or rather, he would not; for had he been there

had the true likeness. We just knew enough of the matter, to make proper admirers.

The mention of this imitation makes me recollect under what frightful circumstances of gaiety we returned from performing an office more than usually melancholy on the sea-shore. I dare allow myself only to allude to it. But we dined and drank after it,—dined little, and drank much. Lord Byron had not shone that day, even in his cups. For myself, I had bordered upon emotions which I have never suffered myself to indulge, and which foolishly as well as impatiently render calamity, as somebody termed it’ “an affront, and not a misfortune.” The barouche drove rapidly through the forest of Pisa. We sang, we laughed, we shouted. I even felt a gaiety the more shocking, because it was real, and a relief. What the coachman thought of us, God knows; but he helped to make up a ghastly trio. He was a good-tempered fellow, and an affectionate husband and father; yet he had the reputation of having offered his master to knock a man on the head. I wish to have no such waking dream again. It was worthy of a German ballad.

This servant his Lordship had exalted into something wonderfully attached to him, though he used to fight hard with the man on some points. But alive as he was to the mock-heroic in others, he would commit it with a strange unconscious gravity, where his own importance was concerned. Another servant of his, a great baby of a fellow, with a florid face and huge whiskers, who, with very equivocal symptoms of valour, talked highly about Greece and fighting, and who went strutting about in a hussar dress, and a sword by his side, gave himself, all on a sudden, such ludicrous airs at the door, as his Lordship’s porter, that notice was taken of it. “Poor fellow!” said Lord Byron, “he is too full of his attachment to me. He is a sort of *Dolabella*!” Thus likening a great simpleton of a footman to the follower of Antony!

“Have you seen my three helmets?” he inquired one day, with an air between hesitation and hurry. Upon being answered in the negative, he said he would show them me, and began to enter a room for that purpose, but stopped short, and put it off to another time. The

mock-heroic was a little too strong for him. These three helmets he had got up in honour of his going to war, and as harbingers of achievement. They were of the proper classical shape, gilt, and had his motto, "Crede Byron," upon them. One was for himself, and the two others were destined to illustrate the heads of the Count Pietro and Mr. Trelawney, who I believe, declined the honour. I saw a specimen afterwards—I never heard any more of them.

It is a problem with the uninitiated, whether lords think much of their titles or not; whether the fair sound is often present to their minds. Some of them will treat the notion with contempt, and call the speculation vulgar. You may set these down in particular for thinking of them often. The chance is, that most of them do, or what is a title worth? They think of them, as beauties think of their cheeks. Lord Byron, as M. Beyle guessed so well, certainly thought a great deal of his. I have touched upon this point before; but I may add, that this was one of the reasons why he was so fond of the Americans, and thought of paying them a visit. He concluded, that having no titles, they had the higher sense of them; otherwise they were not a people to his taste. He thought them shrewd, inasmuch as they were money-getters; but vulgar, and to seek on all other points, and "stubborn dogs." All their patriotism, in his mind, was nothing but stubbornness. He laughed at them, sometimes to their faces: which they were grateful enough to take for companionship and a want of pretence. The homage of one or two of them, however, he had reason to doubt, whether he did or not. I could mention one who knew him thoroughly, and who could never sufficiently express his astonishment at having met with so unpoetical a poet, and so unmajestic a lord. Those who only paid him a short visit, or communicated with him from a distance, seemed as if they could not sufficiently express their flattered sense of his greatness; and he laughed at this, while he delighted in it. Receiving one day a letter from an American, who treated him with a gravity of respect, at once stately and deferential: "Now," said he, "this man thinks he has hit the point to a nicety, and that he has just as proper a notion of a lord as is becoming on both sides; whereas



he is intoxicated with his new correspondent." I will not mention what he said of some others, not Americans, who thought themselves at a great advantage with the uninformed. But so minute was his criticism in these matters, that the most accomplished dedicators would have had reason to dread him, had they known all the niceties of knowledge, human and patrician, which he expected, before he could allow the approach to him to be perfect.

You were not to suppose, however, on your part, that he was more in earnest than he ought to be upon these matters, even when he was most so. He was to think and say what he pleased; but his hearers were to give him credit, in spite of himself, only for what squared with their notions of the graceful. Thus he would make confessions of vanity, or some other fault, or of inaptitude for a particular species of writing, partly to sound what you thought of it, partly that while you gave him credit for the humility, you were to protest against the concession. All the perversity of his spoiled nature would then come into play; and it was in these, and similar perplexities, that the main difficulty of living with him consisted. If you made every thing tell in his favour, as most people did, he was pleased with you for not differing with him, but then nothing was gained. The reverse would have been an affront. He lumped you with the rest; and was prepared to think as little of you in the particular, as he did of any one else.\* If you

\* The following is an extract from a letter of Lord Byron's to Mr. Shelley. It will puzzle the adorers of his early narrative writing; and furnish a subject of pleasing doubt to the public, whether to admire such cavalier treatment of them or not:—

"The only literary news that I have heard of the plays (contrary to your friendly augury,) is that the Edinburgh R. has attacked them all three—as well as it could:—I have not seen the article.—Murray writes discouragingly, and says that nothing published this year has made the least impression, including, I presume, what he has published on my account also.—You see what it is to throw pearls to swine.—As long as I wrote the exaggerated nonsense which has corrupted the public taste, they applauded to the very echo; and now that I have composed, within these three or four years, some things which should 'not willingly be let die,'—the whole herd snort and grumble, and return to wallow in their mire.—However, it is fit I should pay the penalty of spoiling them, as no man has contributed more than me, in my earlier compositions, to produce that exaggerated and false style.—It is a fit retribution that any really classical production should be received as these plays have been treated."



contested a claim, or allowed him to be in the right in a concession, he could neither argue the point nor really concede it. He was only mortified, and would take his revenge. Lastly, if you behaved neither like his admirers in general, nor in a sulky or disputatious manner, but naturally and as if you had a right to your jest and your independence, whether to differ with or admire, and apart from an eternal consideration of himself, he thought it an assumption, and would perplex you with all the airs and humours of an insulted beauty. Thus nobody could rely, for a comfortable intercourse with him, either upon admissions, or non-admissions, or even upon flattery itself. An immeasurable vanity kept even his adorers at a distance; like Xerxes enthroned, with his millions a mile off. And if, in a fit of desperation, he condescended to come closer and be fond, he laughed at you for thinking yourself of consequence to him, if you were taken in; and hated you if you stood out, which was to think yourself of greater consequence. Neither would a knowledge of all this, if you had made him conscious, have lowered his self-admiration a jot. He would have thought it the mark of a great man,—a noble capriciousness,—an evidence of power, which none but the Alexanders and Napoleons of the intellectual world could venture upon. Mr. Hazlitt had some reason to call him “a sublime coxcomb.” Who but he (or Rochester perhaps, whom he resembled) would have thought of avoiding Shakspeare, lest he should be thought to owe him any thing? And talking of Napoleon,—he delighted, when he took the additional name of Noel, in consequence of his marriage with an heiress, to sign himself N. B.; “because,” said he, “Bonaparte and I are the only public persons whose initials are the same.”

I have reason to think, that the opinions I entertained of breeding and refinement puzzled him extremely. At one time he would pay me compliments on the score of manners and appearance; at another, my Jacobinical friends had hurt me, and I had lived too much out of the world. He was not a good judge in either case. His notion of what was gentlemanly in appearance; was a purely conventional one, and could include nothing high-

er. And what was essentially unvulgar, he would take for the reverse, because the polite vulgar did not practise it. I have no doubt he had a poorer opinion of me, from the day that he met me carrying an old painting, which I had picked up. He had beguiled me formerly by bringing parcels of books under his arm; but I now concluded that he had not ventured them in the public eye. His footman must have brought them to the door. For my part, having got rid of some fopperies which I had at that time, I was not going to commence others which I had never been guilty of. I had seen too much of the world for that; not omitting the one that he chose for his arbiter.

Lord Byron knew nothing of the Fine Arts, and did not affect to care for them. He pronounced Rubens a dauber. The only pictures I remember to have seen in his rooms (with the exception of the Italian family pictures, that remained in the houses which he occupied) were a print of Jupiter and Antiope, and another of his little daughter, whom he always mentioned with pride. Pope, before he spoke of Handel, applied to Arbuthnot to know whether the composer really deserved what was said of him. It was after making a similar inquiry, respecting Mozart, that Lord Byron wrote the passage in his notes to Don Juan, giving him the preference to Rossini. Rossini was his real favourite. He liked his dash and animal spirits. All the best music, he said, was lively:—an opinion, in which few lovers of it will agree with him. Mr. Hazlitt, who is a connoisseur in the spirit of contradiction, may think that he said this out of spleen against some remark to the contrary; but in this, as in other instances, the critic is misled by his own practice. It was not difficult to discern the occasions on which Lord Byron spoke out of perversity; nor when it was that he was merely hasty and inconsequential; nor at what times he gave vent to an habitual persuasion; that is to say, translated his own practice and instinct into some sudden opinion. Such was the case in the present instance. I never knew him attempt any air but a lively one; and he was fondest of such as were the most blustering. You associated with it the idea of a stage-tyrant, or captain of banditti. One day he was splen-

etic enough on the subject of music. He said that all lovers of music were effeminate. He was not in good humour, and had heard me, that morning, dabbling, on a piano-forte. This was to provoke me to be out of humour myself; but I was provoked enough not to oblige him. I was ill, with an internal fever preying upon me, and full of cares of all sorts. He, the objector to effeminacy, was setting in health and wealth, with rings on his fingers, and baby-work to his shirt; and he had just issued, like a sultan, out of his bath. I was nevertheless really more tranquil than he, ill and provoked as I was. I said that the love of music might be carried to a pitch of effeminacy, like any other pleasure, but that he would find it difficult to persuade the world, that Alfred, and Epaminondas, and Martin Luther, and Frederick the second, all eminent lovers of music, were effeminate men. He made no answer. I had spoilt a stanza in "Don Juan."

Speaking of "Don Juan," I will here observe that he had no plan with regard to that poem; that he did not know how long he should make it, nor what to do with his hero. He had a great mind to make him die a Methodist—a catastrophe which he sometimes anticipated for himself. I said I thought there was no reason for treating either his hero or himself so ill. That as to his own case, he would find himself mustering up his intellectual faculties in good style as the hour came on, and there was something to do,—barring drugs and a bit of delirium; and with regard to Don Juan, he was a good, careless well-intentioned fellow, (though he might not have like to be told so in the hearing of every body;) and that he deserved at least to be made a retired country gentleman, very speculative and tolerant and fond of his grandchildren. He lent an ear to this, and seemed to like it; but after all, as he had not himself died or retired, and wanted experience to draw upon, the termination of the poem would have depended on what he thought the fashionable world expected of it. His hero in this work was a picture of the better part of his own nature. When the author speaks in his own person, he is endeavouring to bully himself into a satisfaction with the worse and courting the eulogies of the "knowing."

This reminds me of the cunning way in which he has spoken of that passion for money in which he latterly



indulged. He says, in one of his most agreeable, off-hand couplets in "Don Juan," after telling us what a poor inanimate thing life has become for him—

"So for a good old gentlemanly vice,  
I think I shall take up with avarice."

This the public were not to believe. It is a specimen of the artifice noticed in another place. They were to regard it only as a pleasantry, issuing from a generous mouth. However, it was very true. He had already taken up with the vice, as his friends were too well aware; and this couplet was at once to baffle them with a sort of confession, and to secure the public against a suspicion of it. It was curious to see what mastery he suffered the weakest passions to have over him; as if his public fame and abstract superiority were to bear him out privately, in every thing. He confessed that he felt jealous of the smallest accomplishments. The meaning of this was, that supposing every one else, in all probability, to feel so, you were to give him credit for being candid on a point which others concealed, or if they were not, the confession was to strike you as a piece of extraordinary acknowledgment on the part of a great man. The whole truth of the matter was to be found in the indiscriminate admiration he received. Those who knew him, took him at his word. They thought him so little above the weakness, that they did not care to exhibit any such accomplishment before him. We have been told of authors who were jealous even of beautiful women, because they divided attention. I do not think Lord Byron would have entertained a jealousy of this sort. He would have thought the women too much occupied with himself. But he would infallibly have been jealous, had the beautiful woman been a wit, or drawn a circle round her piano-forte. With men I have seen him hold the most childish contests for superiority; so childish that had it been possible for him to divest himself of a sense of his pretensions and public character, they would have exhibited something of the conciliating simplicity of Goldsmith. He would then lay imaginary wagers; and in a style which you would not have looked for in high life, thrust out his chin, and give knowing, self-estimating nods of the head, half nod and half shake, such as boys



playing at chuck-farthings give, when they say, "Come; I tell you what now." A fat dandy who came upon us at Genoa, and pretended to be younger than he was, and to wear his own hair, discomposed him for the day. He declaimed against him in so deploring a tone, and uttered the word "wig" so often that my two eldest boys, who were in the next room, were obliged to stifle their laughter.

His jealousy of Wordsworth and others, who were not town-poets, was more creditable to him, though he did not indulge it in the most becoming manner. He pretended to think worse of them than he did. He had the modesty one day to bring me a stanza, intended for "Don Juan," in which he had sneered at them all, adding, with respect to one of them, that nobody but myself thought highly of him. He fancied I should put up with this, for the sake of being mentioned in the poem, let the mention be what it might; an absurdity, which nothing but his own vanity had suggested. I told him, that I should be unable to consider the introduction of such a stanza as any thing but an affront, and that he had better not put it in. He said he would not, and kept his word. I am now sorry I did not let it go; for it would have done me honour with posterity, far from what he intended. He did not equally keep his word, when he promised me to alter what he had said respecting the cause of Mr. Keats's death. But I speak more of this circumstance hereafter. For Southey he had as much contempt as any man can well have for another, especially for one who can do him an injury. He thought him a washy writer, and a canting politician; half a mercenary, and half a moral coxcomb. He was sadly out, however, when he compared his generousities with those of the Lake poet, and gave himself the preference. Mr. Southey, from all that I have heard, is a truly generous man, and says nothing about it. Lord Byron was not a generous man; and, in what he did, he contrived either to blow a trumpet before it himself, or to see that others blew one for him. I speak of his conduct latterly. What he might have done, before he thought fit to put an end to his doubts respecting the superiority of being generous, I cannot say; but if you were to believe himself, he had a propensity to avarice from a child. At Harrow, he told me, he would save up his money, not as other

boys did, for the pleasure of some great purchase or jovial expense, but in order to look at it and count it. I was to believe as much of this, or in such a manner, as to do him honour for the confession; but, unluckily, it had become too much like the practice of his middle age, not to be believed entirely. It was too obvious a part of the predominant feature in his character,—which was an indulgence of his self-will and self-love united, denying himself no pleasure that could add to the intensity of his consciousness, and the means of his being powerful and effective, with a particular satisfaction in contributing as little as possible to the same end in others. His love of notoriety was superior even to his love of money; which is giving the highest idea that can be entertained of it. But he was extremely anxious to make them go hand in hand. At one time he dashed away in England and got into debt, because he thought expense became him; but he looked to retrieving all this, and more, by marrying a fortune. When Shelley lived near him in Switzerland, he appeared to be really generous, because he had a generous man for his admirer, and one whose influence he felt extremely. Besides, Mr. Shelley had money himself, or the expectation of it; and he respected him the more, and was anxious to look well in his eyes on that account. In Italy, where a different mode of life, and the success of Beppo and Don Juan had made him conclude that the romantic character was not necessary to fame, he shocked his companion one day, on renewing their intimacy, by asking him, whether he did not feel a real respect for a wealthy man, or, at least, a greater respect for the rich man of the company, than for any other? Mr. Shelley gave him what Napoleon would have called “a superb no.” It is true, the same question might have been put at random to a hundred Englishmen; and all, if they were honest, might have answered “Yes;” but these would have come from the middling ranks, where the possession of wealth is associated with the idea of cleverness and industry. Among the privileged orders, where riches are inherited, the estimation is much more equivocal, the richest man there being often the idlest and stupidest. But Mr. Shelley had as little respect for the possession or accumulation of wealth under any cir-

cumstances, as Lord Byron had the reverse; and he would give away hundreds with as much zeal for another man's comfort, as the noble Lord would willingly save a guinea even in securing his pleasures. Perhaps, at one period of his residence there, no man in Italy, certainly no Englishman, ever contrived to practise more rakery and economy at one and the same time. Italian women are not averse to accepting presents, or any other mark of kindness; but they can do without them, and his Lordship put them to the test. Presents, by way of showing his gratitude, or as another mode of interchanging delight and kindness between friends, he had long ceased to make. I doubt whether his fair friend, Madame Guiccioli, ever received so much as a ring or a shawl from him. It is true, she did not require it. She was happy to show her disinterestedness in all points unconnected with the pride of her attachment; and I have as little doubt, that he would assign this as a reason for his conduct, and say he was as happy to let her prove it. But to be a poet and a wit, and to have had a liberal education, and write about love and lavishment, and not to find it in his heart, after all, to be able to put a friend and a woman upon a footing of graceful comfort with him in so poor a thing as a money matter,—these were the sides of his character, in which love, as well as greatness, found him wanting, and in which it could discern no relief to its wounded self-respect, but at the risk of a greater mortification. The love of money, the pleasure of receiving it, even the gratitude he evinced when it was saved him, had not taught him the only virtue upon which lovers of money usually found their claims to a good construction:—he did not like paying a debt, and would undergo pestering and pursuit to avoid it. “But what,” cries the reader, “becomes then of the stories of his making presents of money and manuscripts, and his not caring for the profits of his writings, and his giving 10,000*l.* to the Greeks?” He did care for the profits of what he wrote, and he reaped a great deal: but, as I have observed before, he cared for celebrity still more; and his presents, such as they were, were judiciously made to that end. “Good heavens!” said a fair friend to me the other day, who knew him well,—“if he had but



foreseen that you would have given the world an account of him! What would he not have done to cut a figure in your eyes!" As to the Greeks, the *present* of 10,000*l.* was first of all well trumpeted to the world: it then became a *loan* of 10,000*l.*; then a loan of 6000*l.*; and he told me in one of his incontinent fits of communication and knowingness, that he did not think he should "*get off*" under 4000*l.*" I know not how much was lent after all; but I have been told, that good security was taken for it; and I was informed the other day, that the whole money had been repaid. He was so jealous of your being easy upon the remotest points connected with property, that if he saw you ungrudging even upon so small a tax on your liberality as the lending of books, he would not the less fidget and worry you in lending his own. He contrived to let you feel that you had got them, and would insinuate that you had treated them carelessly, though he did not scruple to make marks and dogs'-ears in yours. O Truth! what scrapes of portraiture have you not got me into!

I believe there did exist one person to whom he would have been generous, if she pleased; perhaps was so. At all events, he left her the bulk of his property, and always spoke of her with the greatest esteem. This was his sister, Mrs. Leigh. He told me she used to call him "Baby Byron!" It was easy to see, that of the two persons, she had by far the greater judgment; I will add, without meaning to impeach her womanhood, the more masculine sense. She has recorded him on his tomb as the author of "Childe Harold," which was not so judicious; but this may have been owing to a fit of affectionate spleen at "Don Juan," which she could not bear, and (I was told) would never speak of. She thought he had committed his dignity in it. I believe she was the only woman for whom he ever entertained a real respect; a feeling, which was mixed up perhaps with something of family self-love. The only man he professed to entertain a real friendship for, was Lord Clare. I conclude that his lordship may be excepted from the number of friends whom he "libelled all round."

+ His temper was not good. Reading one day in Montaigne the confession of that philosopher and "Seigneur,"



that a saddle not well fastened, or the flapping of a leather against his boot, would put him out of sorts for the day, he said it was his own case; and he seemed to think it that of every body else of any importance, if people would but confess it; otherwise they were dull or wanted vigour. For he was always mistaking the subtlety of that matter, and confounding patience with weakness, because there was a weak patience as well as a strong one. But it was not only in small things that he was "put out." I have seen the expression of his countenance on greater occasions, absolutely festered with ill-temper,—all the beauty of it corrugated and made sore,—his voice at the same time being soft, and struggling to keep itself in, as if on the very edge of endurance. On such occasions, having no address, he did not know how to let himself be extricated from his position; and if I found him in this state, I contrived to make a few remarks, as serious as possible, on indifferent subjects, and so come away. An endeavour to talk him out of it as a weakness, he might have had reason to resent:—sympathy would probably have drawn upon you a discussion of matters too petty for your respect, and gaiety would have been treated as an assumption, necessary to be put down by sarcasms, which it would have been necessary to put down in their turn. There was no living with these eternal assumptions and inequalities. When he knew me in England, independent and able to do him service, he never ventured upon a raillery. In Italy, he soon began to treat me with it; and I was obliged, for both our sakes, to tell him I did not like it, and that he was too much in earnest. Raillery, indeed, unless it is managed with great delicacy, and borne as well by him that uses it as it is expected to be borne by its object, is unfit for grown understandings. It is a desperate substitute for animal spirits; and no more resembles them, than a jostle resembles a dance. Like boys fighting in sport, some real blow is given, and the rest is fighting in earnest. A passing, delicate raillery is another matter, and may do us both a good and a pleasure; but it requires exquisite handling. You can imagine it is Sir Richard Steele, or Garth, or any other good-natured wit, who is not in the habit of objecting. My friend Charles Lamb has rallied me, and

made me love him the more. So has Mr. Shelley. But in a man of more doubtful candour or benevolence, in Addison for instance, with his natural reserve and his born *parsonism*, you would begin to suspect the motive to it; and in the case of Swift or Johnson, it no doubt much oftener produced awkward retaliations, than biographers have thought fit to record.

If Lord Byron had been a man of address, he would have been a kinder man. He never heartily forgave either you or himself for his deficiency on this point; and hence a good deal of his ill-temper, and his carelessness of your feelings. By any means, fair or foul, he was to make up for the disadvantage; and with all his exaction of conventional propriety from others, he could set it at naught in his own conduct in the most remarkable manner. He had an incontinence, I believe unique, in talking of his affairs, and showing you other people's letters. He would even make you presents of them; and I have accepted one or two that they might go no farther. But I have mentioned this before. If his five hundred confidants, by a retinence as remarkable as his laxity, had not kept his secrets better than he did himself, the very devil might have been played with I know not how many people. But there was always this saving reflection to be made, that the man who could be guilty of such extravagances for the sake of making an impression, might be guilty of exaggerating or inventing what astonished you; and indeed, though he was a speaker of the truth on ordinary occasions,—that is to say, he did not tell you he had seen a dozen horses, when he had seen only two,—yet, as he professed not to value the truth when in the way of his advantage, (and there was nothing he thought more to his advantage than making you stare at him,) the persons who were liable to suffer from his incontinence, had all the right in the world to the benefit of this consideration.

His superstition was remarkable. I do not mean in the ordinary sense, because it was superstition, but because it was petty and old-womanish. He believed in the ill-luck of Fridays, and was seriously disconcerted if any thing was to be done on that frightful day of the week. Had he been a Roman, he would have startled

at crows, while he made a jest of augurs. He used to tell a story of somebody's meeting him, while in Italy, in St. James's-street. The least and most childish of superstitions may, it is true, find subtle corners of warrant in the greatest minds: but as the highest pictures in Lord Byron's poetry were imitations, so in the smallest of his personal superstitions he was maintained by something not his own. His turn of mind was material egotism, and some remarkable experiences, had given it a compulsory twist the other way; but it never grew kindly or loftily in that quarter. Hence his taking refuge from uneasy thoughts, in sarcasm, and trifling, and notoriety. What there is of a good-natured philosophy in "Don Juan" was not foreign to his wishes; but it was the common-place of the age, repeated with an air of discovery by the noble Lord, and as ready to be thrown in the teeth of those from whom he took it, provided any body laughed at them. His soul might well have been met in St. James's-street, for in the remotest of his poetical solitudes it was there. As to those who attribute the superstition of men of letters to infidelity, and then object to it for being inconsistent, because it is credulous, there is no greater inconsistency than their own; for as it is the very essence of infidelity to doubt, so according to the nature it inhabits, it may as well doubt whether such and such things do exist, as whether they do: whereas, on the other hand, belief in particular dogmas, by the very nature of its tie, is precluded from this uncertainty, perhaps at the expense of being more foolishly certain.

It has been thought by some, that there was madness in his composition. He himself talked sometimes as if he feared it would come upon him. It was difficult in his most serious moments, to separate what he spoke out of conviction, and what he said for effect. In moments of ill-health, especially when jaded and overwrought by the united effects of composition, and drinking, and sitting up, he might have had nervous misgivings to that effect; as more people perhaps are accustomed to have, than choose to talk about it. But I never saw any thing more mad in his conduct, than what I have just been speaking of; and there was enough in the nature of his position to account for extravagances in him, that would



not have attained to that head under other circumstances. If every extravagance of which men are guilty, were to be pronounced madness, the world would be nothing but the Bedlam which some have called it; and then the greatest madness of all would be the greatest rationality; which, according to others, it is. There is no end to these desperate modes of settling and unsettling every thing at a jerk. There was great perversity and self-will in Lord Byron's composition. It arose from causes which it would do honour to the world's rationality to consider a little closer, and of which I shall speak presently. This it was, together with extravagant homage paid him, that pampered into so regal a size every inclination which he chose to give way to. But he did not take a hawk for a handsaw; nor will the world think him deficient in brain. Perhaps he may be said to have had something, in little, of the madness which was brought upon the Roman emperors in great. His real pretensions were mixed up with imaginary ones, and circumstances contributed to give the whole a power, or at least a presence in the eyes of men, which his temperament was too feeble to manage properly. But it is not in the light of a madman that the world will ever seriously consider a man whose productions delight them, and whom they place in the rank of contributors to the stock of wit. It is not as the madman witty, but as the wit, injured by circumstances considered to be rational, that Lord Byron is to be regarded. If his wit indeed would not have existed without these circumstances, then it would only show us that the perversest things have a tendency to right themselves, or produce their ultimate downfall: and so far, I would as little deny that his Lordship had a spice of madness in him, as I deny that he had not every excuse for what was unpleasant in his composition; which was none of his own making. So far, also, I would admit that a great part of the world are as mad as some have declared all the rest to be; that is to say, that although they are rational enough to perform the common offices of life, and even to persuade the rest of mankind that their pursuits and passions are what they should be, they are in reality but half rational beings, contradicted in the very outset of existence,



and dimly struggling through life with the perplexity sown within them.

To explain myself very freely: I look upon Lord Byron as an excessive instance of what we see in hundreds of cases every day; namely, of the unhappy consequences of parentage that ought never to have existed,—of the perverse and discordant humours of those who were the authors of his being. His father was a rake of the wildest description; his mother a violent woman, very unfit to improve the offspring of such a person. She would vent her spleen by loading her child with reproaches; and add, by way of securing their bad effect, that he would be as great a reprobate as his father. Thus did his parents embitter his nature: thus they embittered his memory of them, contradicted his beauty with deformity, and completed the mischances of his existence. Perhaps both of them had a goodness at heart, which had been equally perplexed. *(It is not that individuals are to blame, or that human nature is bad; but that experience has not yet made it wise enough.)* Animal beauty they had at least a sense of. In this our poet was conceived; but contradiction of all sorts was superadded, and he was born handsome, wilful, and lame. A happy childhood might have corrected his evil tendencies; but he had it not; and the upshot was, that he spent an uneasy over-excited life, and that society have got an amusing book or two by his misfortunes. The books may even help to counteract the spreading of such a misfortune; and so far it may be better for society that he lived. But this is a rare case. Thousands of such mistakes are round about us, with nothing to show for them but complaint and unhappiness.

Lord Byron's face was handsome, eminently so in some respects. He had a mouth and chin fit for Apollo; and when I first knew him, there were both lightness and energy all over his aspect. But his countenance did not improve with age, and there were always some defects in it. The jaw was too big for the upper part. It had all the wilfulness of a despot in it. The animal predominated over the intellectual part of his head, inasmuch as the face altogether was large in proportion to the skull. The eyes also were set too near one another;

and the nose, though handsome in itself, had the appearance when you saw it closely in front, of being grafted on the face, rather than growing properly out of it. His person was very handsome, though terminating in lameness, and tending to fat and effeminacy; which makes me remember what a hostile fair one objected to him, namely, that he had little beard; a fault which, on the other hand, was thought by another lady, not hostile, to add to the divinity of his aspect,—*imberbis Apollo*. His lameness was only in one foot, the left; and it was so little visible to casual notice, that as he lounged about a room (which he did in such a manner as to screen it) it was hardly perceivable. But it was a real and even a sore lameness. Much walking upon it fevered and hurt it. It was a shrunken foot, a little twisted. This defect unquestionably mortified him exceedingly, and helped to put sarcasm and misanthropy into his taste of life. Unfortunately, the usual thoughtlessness of schoolboys made him feel it bitterly at Harrow. He would wake, and find his leg in a tub of water. The reader will see in the correspondence at the end of this memoir, how he felt it, whenever it was libelled; and in Italy, the only time I ever knew it mentioned, he did not like the subject, and hastened to change it. His handsome person so far rendered the misfortune greater, as it pictured to him all the occasions on which he might have figured in the eyes of company; and doubtless this was a great reason, why he had no better address. On the other hand, instead of losing him any real regard or admiration, his lameness gave a touching character to both. Certainly no reader would have liked him; or woman loved him, the less, for the thought of this single contrast to his superiority. But the very defect had taught him to be impatient with deficiency. When I think of these things, and of the common weaknesses of society, as at present constituted, I feel as if I could shed tears over the most willing of my resentments, much more over the most unwilling, and such as I never intended to speak of; nor could any thing have induced me to give a portrait of Lord Byron and his infirmities, if I had not been able to say at the end of it, that his faults were not his own, and that we must

seek the causes of them in mistakes common to us all. What is delightful to us in his writings will still remain so, if we are wise; and what ought not to be, will not only cease to be perilous, but be useful. Faults which arise from an exuberant sociality, like those of Burns, may safely be left to themselves. They at once explain themselves by their natural candour, and carry an advantage with them; because any thing is advantageous in the long run to society, which tends to break up their selfishness. But doctrines, or half-doctrines, or whatever else they may be, which tend to throw individuals upon themselves, and overcast them at the same time with scorn and alienation, it is as well to see traced to their sources. In comparing notes, humanity gets wise; and certainly the wiser it gets, it will not be the less modest or humane, whether it has to find fault, or to criticise the fault-finder.

I believe if any body could have done good to Lord Byron, it was Goethe and his correspondence. It was a pity he did not live to have more of it. Goethe might possibly have enabled him, as he wished he could, "to know himself," and do justice to the yearnings after the good and beautiful inseparable from the nature of genius. But the danger was, that he would have been influenced as much by the rank and reputation of that great man, as by the reconciling nobleness of his philosophy; and personal intercourse with him would have spoilt all. Lord Byron's nature was mixed up with too many sophistications to receive a proper impression from any man: and he would have been jealous, if he once took it in his head that the other was thought to be his superior.

Lord Byron had no conversation, properly speaking. He could not interchange ideas or information with you, as a man of letters is expected to do. His thoughts required the concentration of silence and study to bring them to a head; and they deposited the amount in the shape of a stanza. His acquaintance with books was very circumscribed. The same personal experience, however, upon which he very properly drew for his authorship, might have rendered him a companion more interesting by far than men who could talk better; and the great reason why his conversation disappointed you was,



not that he had not any thing to talk about, but that he was haunted with a perpetual affectation, and could not talk sincerely. It was by fits only that he spoke with any gravity, or made his extraordinary disclosures; and at no time did you well know what to believe. The rest was all quip and crank, not of the pleasantest kind, and equally distant from simplicity or wit. The best thing to say of it was, that he knew playfulness to be consistent with greatness; and the worst, that he thought every thing in him was great even to his vulgarities.

Mr. Shelley said of him, that he never made you laugh to your own content. This, however, was said latterly, after my friend had been disappointed by a close intimacy. Mr. Shelley's opinion of his natural powers in every respect was great; and there is reason to believe, that Lord Byron never talked with any man to so much purpose as he did with him. | He looked upon him as his most admiring listener; and probably was never less under the influence of affectation. If he could have got rid of this and his title, he would have talked like a man; not like a mere man of the town, or a great spoilt schoolboy. It is not to be concluded, that his jokes were not now and then very happy, or that admirers of his Lordship, who paid him visits, did not often go away more admiring. I am speaking of his conversation in general, and of the impression it made upon you; compared with what was to be expected from a man of wit and experience.

He had a delicate white hand, of which he was proud; and he attracted attention to it by rings. He thought a hand of this description almost the only mark remaining now-a-days of a gentleman; of which it certainly is not, nor of a lady either; though a coarse one implies handiwork. He often appeared holding a handkerchief, upon which his jewelled fingers lay imbedded, as in a picture. He was as fond of fine linen, as a quaker; and had the remnant of his hair oiled and trimmed with all the anxiety of a Sardanapalus.

The visible character to which this effeminacy gave rise appears to have indicated itself as early as his travels in the Levant, where the Grand Signior is said to have taken him for a woman in disguise. But he had tastes of a more masculine description. He was fond of

swimming to the last, and used to push out to a good distance in the Gulf of Genoa. He was also, as I have before mentioned, a good horseman; and he liked to have a great dog or two about him, which is not a habit observable in timid men. Yet I doubt greatly whether he was a man of courage. I suspect, that personal anxiety, coming upon a constitution unwisely treated, had no small hand in hastening his death in Greece.

The story of his bold behaviour at sea in a voyage to Sicily, and of Mr. Shelley's timidity, is just reversing what I conceive would have been the real state of the matter, had the voyage taken place. The account is an impudent fiction. Nevertheless, he volunteered voyages by sea, when he might have eschewed them: and yet the same man never got into a coach without being afraid. In short, he was the contradiction his father and mother had made him. To lump together some more of his personal habits, in the style of old Aubrey, he spelt affectedly, swore somewhat, had the Northumbrian burr in his speech, did not like to see women eat, and would merrily say that he had another reason for not liking to dine with them; which was, that they always had the wings of the chicken.

For the rest,

“Ask you why *Byron* broke through every rule?  
 ’Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.”

He has added another to the list of the Whartons and Buckinghams, though his vices were in one respect more prudent, his genius greater, and his end a great deal more lucky. Perverse from his birth, educated under personal disadvantages, debauched by ill companions, and perplexed between real and false pretensions, the injuries done to his nature were completed by a success, too great even for the genius he possessed; and as his life was never so unfortunate as when it appeared to be most otherwise, so nothing could happen more seasonably for him, or give him what he would most have desired under any other circumstances, than his death.

A variety of other recollections of Lord Byron have been suggested to me by the accounts of him hitherto published; which I accordingly proceed to notice. They

are for the most part ludicrously erroneous; but the examination of them will furnish us with the truth. They may be divided into five classes:—those which really contain something both true and new respecting him; those that contain two or three old truths vamped up in a popular manner to sell; thirdly, criticisms upon his genius, written with more or less good faith; fourthly, compilations containing all that could be scraped together respecting him, true or false; and fifthly, pure impudent fictions.

Of the last class is an account of a pretended *Voyage to Sicily*, which does not contain a word of truth from beginning to end.

Of the fourth, the most conspicuous, is the *Life and Times*, a jovial farrago in four volumes, written by as unparticular a fellow as one should wish too see with a pair of scissors in his hand.

The best among the third is a volume by Sir Egerton Brydges, entitled “Letters on the Character and Poetical Genius of Lord Byron.” They are more elaborate than profound; but not without insight into the matter; nor uninformed, perhaps, by a certain sympathy with the aristocratical as well as poetical pretensions of the noble Bard; a feeling, of which his Lordship would have been quicker to accept the compliment, than acknowledge the reciprocity.

A “Life and Genius” by “Sir Cosmo Gordon,” stood at the head of the second class, and was a quick, little, good-humoured supply for the market, remarkable for the conscientiousness of its material.

The only publications that contained any thing at once new and true respecting Lord Byron were, *Dallas's Recollections*, the *Conversations by Captain Medwin*, and Parry's and Gamba's Accounts of his *Last Days*. A good deal of the real character of his Lordship, though not always as the writer viewed it, may be gathered from most of them; particularly the first two. Parry's is a more respectable book, than the vulgar character of the man, and his pot-house buffoonery upon Mr. Bentham, would lead us to suppose; and Conte Pietro Gamba is ever the gentleman, worthy of all credit. The frontispiece to Mr. Parry's book pre-



sents us with a whole-length figure of Lord Byron, very like his usual style of dress and appearance, after he had grown thin again. This portrait of him for his latter days (though rather in general aspect than countenance,) the portrait of him by Phillips for his younger, and a full-length silhouette published by Ackermann, for the turn of his expression and figure when at the fattest, exhibit the three resemblances of him the most to be relied on. But "the Major's book" is that of an humble retainer, grateful for condescension; and Conte Pietro modestly professes to be nothing but an adherent.

Dallas, who was a sort of lay-priest, errs from being half-witted. He must have tired Lord Byron to death with blind beggings of the question, and solemn mistakes. The wild poet ran against him, and scattered his faculties. To the last he does not seem to have made up his mind, whether his Lordship was Christian or Atheist. I can settle at least a part of that dilemma. Christian he certainly was not. He neither wrote nor talked, as any Christian, in the ordinary sense of the word, would have done: and as to the rest, the strength of his belief probably varied according to his humour, and was at all times as undecided and uneasy, as the lights hitherto obtained by mere reason were calculated to render it. The companion, of whom he used to entertain the highest opinion, he took to be an Atheist. It is remarkable, that when at college, he had a similar respect for another. But I have known him, after the death of the former, and when he suspected that the opinion had not been reciprocal, reproach his memory with the doctrine.

The following is an instance of the way in which Mr. Dallas takes things for granted. "In vain," says he, "was Lord Byron led into the defiance of the sacred writings; there are passages in his letters and in his works, which show, that religion might have been in his soul. Could he cite the following lines and resist the force of them? It is true that he marks them for the beauty of the verse, but no less for the sublimity of the conceptions; and I cannot but hope, that had he lived, he would have proved another instance of genius bowing to the power of truth.

“Dim as the borrow’d beams of moon and stars,  
 ‘To lonely, wandering, weary travellers,  
 Is reason to the soul.—And as on high  
 Those lonely fires discover but the sky,  
 Not light us here; so reason’s glimmering ray  
 Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,  
 But guide us upwards to a better day.  
 And as those nightly tapers disappear,  
 When day’s bright lord ascends our hemisphere,  
 So pale grows reason at religion’s sight,  
 So dies, and so dissolves, in supernatural light.”

DRYDEN—Quoted from *The Liberal*.

Now, the passage here quoted was quoted by myself, one of those “atheists and scoffers,” according to Mr. Dallas, by whom “he was led into defiance of the sacred writings.”

There is a favourite and foolish saying, “*Ex uno disce omnes*,” which if Mr. Dallas were to be judged by, according to his fondness for such sayings, his whole book would be pronounced a parcel of lies.

Captain Medwin quotes the saying, and makes an unfounded assertion at one and the same time. “To give the reader,” says he, “an idea of the stories circulated and believed about Lord Byron, I will state one, as a specimen of the rest, which I heard the other day:—

“‘Lord Byron, who is an execrably bad horseman, was riding one evening in the Brenta, spouting, ‘Metastasio;’ a Venetian, passing in a close carriage at the time, laughed at his bad Italian: upon which his Lordship horsewhipped him, and threw a card in at the window. The nobleman took no notice of the insult.’—Lord Byron was an excellent horseman, never read a line of ‘Metastasio,’ and pronounced Italian like a native. He must have been remarkably ingenious to horsewhip in a *close carriage*, and find a nobleman who pocketed the affront! But ‘*ex uno disce omnes*.’” Vol. i.

Now that Lord Byron was an excellent horseman, is true:—that he never read a line of “Metastasio,” I doubt, and should have doubted it, if he had said as much; for “Metastasio,” an author who had obtained great reputation with no very great genius, was precisely the sort of man to pique his curiosity; and he must often have fallen in his way:—but that he “pronounced Italian like a native,” I deny without fear of contradiction from any body

who is at all acquainted with that language. He spoke it fluently; but his pronunciation was as poor as that of most foreigners, and worse than many; for he scarcely opened his mouth.

Captain Medwin afterwards tells us that the noble poet's "voice had a flexibility, a variety in its tones, a power and a pathos beyond any I ever heard."—This is harmless, as an instance of the effect which his Lordship had upon the Captain; but from all I ever heard of it, I should form a very different judgment. His voice, as far as I was acquainted with it, though not incapable of loudness nor unmelodious in its deeper tones, was confined. He made an effort when he threw it out. The sound of it in ordinary, except when he laughed, was petty and lugubrious. He spoke inwardly, and slurred over his syllables, perhaps in order to hide the *burr*. In short, it was as much the reverse of any thing various and powerful, as his enunciation was of any thing articulate. But I do not know what passion might have made of it. The few times I saw him in a state of violent emotion, it was lower than ever. I can imagine him to have been loud in reciting a declamation, if he chose to be so. He could be loud in singing; and he then threw out at once the best and most powerful tones in his voice; but the effect (as I have already described it) had always an appearance of effort. After all, there may have been greater strength in his voice than it was my chance to witness; but the "flexibility," and the "variety of tones," to say nothing of the pathos, were assuredly in the Captain's imagination.

Next comes a mistake on a more painful subject. Captain Medwin, in describing the exhumation of Mr. Shelley's remains, has the following passage:—"As a foreground to this picture appeared as extraordinary a group. Lord Byron and Mr. Trelawney were seen standing over the burning pile, with some of the soldiers of the guard; and Leigh Hunt, whose feelings and nerves could not carry him through the scene of horror, lying back in the carriage, the four post-horses ready to drop with the intensity of the noon-day sun."—I have noticed this misrepresentation before; but will now do it more at length. Lord Byron was not present at this scene. He went thither in



his carriage, and I was with him; but on getting out, he studiously kept aloof, and was not in sight while the melancholy proceedings took place. With regard to myself, "my feelings and nerves," however they might have suffered, would have carried me through any thing where Mr. Shelley was concerned, provided it was necessary. They have never failed me on very trying occasions. But my assistance was not required: there were no feelings on the part of another to stand by and soothe; and though I did not "lie back" in the carriage (as is here made out for the sake of effect) I confess I could not voluntarily witness the thrustings in of the spade and pick-axe upon the unburied body of my friend, and have the chance of hearing them strike against his skull, as they actually did. Let me hasten from this subject.

According to Captain Medwin, Lord Byron said of the writer of these pages, that till his voyage to Italy he "had never been ten miles from St. Paul's." The captain ought to have known enough of his lordship's random way of talking, not to take for granted every thing that he chose to report of another. I had never been out of England before; except, when a child, to the coast of France; but I had perhaps seen as much of my native country as most persons educated in town. I had been in various parts of it, from Devonshire to Yorkshire. I merely mention these things to show what idle assertions Lord Byron would repeat, and how gravely the Captain would echo them. If every body, mentioned in his work, were thus to deduct from it what he knows to be untrue, how much would remain uncontradicted?

"I never met with any man who shines so much in conversation." That is to say, Captain Medwin never met before with a lord so much the rage. He says a little afterwards, that his Lordship "never showed the author," and that he "prided himself most on being a man of the world and of fashion;"—that is, to Captain Medwin; whose admiration, he saw, ran to that side of things. The truth is, as I have before stated, that he had no conversation in the higher sense of the word, owing to these perpetual affectations; but instead of never showing the author on that account, he never forgot it. His sole object was to have an admiring report of himself, as

a genius, who could be lord, author, or what he pleased. "His anecdotes," says Medwin, "of life and living character were inexhaustible." This was true, if you chose to listen to them, and to take every thing he said for granted; but every body was not prepared, like the Captain, to be thankful for stories of the noble Lord and all his acquaintances, male and female.

"Miserly in trifles—*about to lavish his whole fortune on the Greeks*"—(oh happy listener!)"—"to-day diminishing his stud—to-morrow taking a large family *under his roof*," (an ingenious nicety!) or giving 1000*l.* for a yacht" (a sum, which it very much surprised and vexed him to be charged;) "dining for a few Pauls when alone—spending hundreds when he has friends; '*Nil fuit unquam*,' says the gallant and classical officer, '*sic impar sibi*.'"

But enough of Captain Medwin, his Latin, and his Greek, for he also quotes Greek, or as he pleasantly says, "adapts" it; that is—But I shall be making a sorry criticism of a sorry matter. I had the pleasure of a visit from Captain Medwin while "under the roof" that he speaks of, and should have said nothing calculated to disturb the innocence of his *politesse*, had he abstained from repeating scandals respecting women, and not taken upon himself to criticise the views and "philosophy" of Mr. Shelley; a man, of whom he was qualified to know still less, than of Lord Byron. With the cautions here afforded to the reader, a better idea of his Lordship may certainly be drawn from his account, than from any other. The warmth of his homage drew out the noble Bard on some points, upon which he would have been cautious of committing himself with a less wholesale admirer; and not the least curious part of the picture, is this mutual excess of their position.

An article was written in "The Westminster Review" (Medwin says by Mr. Hobhouse) to show that the Conversations were altogether unworthy of credit. There are doubtless many inaccuracies in the latter; but the spirit remains undoubted; and the author of the criticism was only vexed, that such was the fact. He assumes, that Lord Byron could not have made this or that statement to Captain Medwin, because the statement was

erroneous or untrue but an anonymous author has no right to be believed in preference to one who speaks in his own name: there is nothing to show that Mr. Hobhouse might not have been as mistaken about a date or an epigram as Mr. Medwin; and when we find him giving us his own version of a fact, and Mr. Medwin asserting that Lord Byron gave him another, the only impression left upon the mind of any body who knew his Lordship is, that the fault most probably lay in the loose corners of the noble Poet's vivacity. Such is the impression made upon the author of an unpublished Letter to Mr. Hobhouse, which has been shown me in print; and he had a right to it. The Reviewer, to my knowledge, is mistaken upon some points, as well as the person he reviews. The assumption, that nobody can know any thing about Lord Byron, but two or three persons who were conversant with him for a certain space of time, and whom he spoke of with as little ceremony, and would hardly treat with more confidence than he did a hundred others, is ludicrous; and can only end, as the criticism has done, in doing no good either to him or them.

The *Life and Times* is a curiosity, if it were only for the title. But in contradicting its heap of absurdities, some more truths will come out for the reader's entertainment. The title-page is worth repeating, as a full-blown specimen of this sort of flourishing.

"The LIFE, WRITINGS, OPINIONS, and TIMES of the RIGHT HON. GEORGE GORDEN NOEL BYRON, LORD BYRON; including in its most extensive biography, anecdotes and memoirs of the lives of the most eminent and eccentric, public and noble characters and courtiers of the present polished and enlightened Age and Court of His Majesty King George the Fourth. In the course of the biography are also separately given copious recollections of the lately destroyed MS., originally intended for posthumous publication, and entitled, *Memoirs of My Own Life and Times*. By the Right Hon. Lord Byron.

"CREDE BYRON." *Motto of the Byron Family.*

"I have, in this rough work, shaped out a man  
Whom this beneath world doth embrace and hug



With amplest entertainment: my free drift  
 Halts not particularly, but moves itself  
 In a wide sea of wax; no levelled malice  
 Infects one comma in the course I hold,  
 But flies an eagle, flight, bold and forth-on  
 Leaving no track behind."—SHAKSPEARE, *Timon of Athens*.

By an English Gentleman in the Greek Military Service, and Comrade of his Lordship. Compiled from documents, and from long personal acquaintance. In Three Volumes. Volume I. London: Matthew Iley, Somerset-street, Portman-square. MDCCCXXV.

There may be, it seems, enthusiasm in every thing, even in book-making. Here is a volume of sound in the very types. They are proportioned to the impression intended to be made on the sensorium. We have the LIFE, WRITINGS, OPINIONS, and TIMES of LORD BYRON very large: then, after a proper crowd of polite capitals, comes the "AGE AND COURT OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE THE FOURTH," with its greatness reasonably diminished; then "Copious Recollections of the lately destroyed MS., originally intended for posthumous publication," very nice and particular; then a flourish of trumpets again in the size of the "RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON," a title to admiration which cannot be too often repeated; after which, we have the Family Motto, asking and receiving trust; then the Motto from Shakspeare, really good; and the procession is closed by the Author in person, who in modest capitals announces himself as an English Gentleman, comrade of his Lordship, who has judiciously entered into the Greek military service, and, of course does not like to be known. It would have hurt the feelings of the Sultan; whom he is doubtless intimate with, his Lordship once having spoken with that personage. The writer concludes with informing us, if we choose to overhear him (for his types on this occasion amount to a whisper,) that all this world of information is "compiled from authentic documents, and from long personal acquaintance;" and our gratitude is consummated, by the information, that we have three volumes of it; a whole paradise of knowledge.

In a preface full of mistakes, and containing a remarkable mixture of credulity and puffing, the author dis-

cusses the right of Lord Byron's connexions to suppress his memoirs; which right he denies. He says that his Lordship was public property; that the work was bequeathed by him to posterity; and that no consideration for individuals ought to have withheld it. Nobody will agree with this, except persons eager at all hazards to gratify their curiosity, and there is one hazard which would stop even them:—viz. the mention of themselves. The present times have remarkably exemplified the old remark, that there are none so furious at being spoken ill of, as those who delight to hear scandal of others. The question respecting the publication of Lord Byron's autobiography is, not whether posterity, that is, our children's children, might not have a right to it, if it could be recovered, which it probably will; but whether the curiosity of his contemporaries had a right to be gratified at the hazard of wounding the feelings and risking the peace and reputation of the living; all this, too, on the *ipse dixit* of a man of violent impulses, who had a false opinion of human nature, and little cared what feelings he wounded, where his own mortification, or wit, or love of display, was concerned. In the course of time, when the author becomes better known, and a calmer estimate can be formed both of his merits and mistakes, readers may take up such a book with no hurt at all to the feelings of living persons, and perhaps no injustice to those who are dead. Their knowledge of the writer would qualify what he said of them; and on intimate acquaintance with himself, beyond what he intended (for such is the inevitable betrayal of all autobiographies,) might repay the world for any injustice hazarded on that score. They would have the benefit accruing from the anatomy of an extraordinary individual. For I hold it to be certain, that an exposition of the real feelings and opinions of any body superior to the ordinary run of mankind, would serve to strike out new lights for the conduct and improvement of the human race, even, perhaps, from what were considered his errors. The errors of one generation may turn out to be the virtues of another; just as the virtue of one (religious intolerance for example) may turn out to be an error. I should like to know every particle of the lives of Plato and Socrates, of

Brutus and of Cæsar and Marcus Aurelius, of Dante and Ariosto, of such men as Mazarin and De Retz, of Henry the Fourth, of Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Milton, of Pope and Swift: and the more particularly, the more they differed in their conduct from the times they lived in. It is said, that great men resemble little men in their passions; but perhaps they are not so much mistaken as little men in the nature of them, and in the greater or less quantity of judgment with which they are treated by society; and, at all events, we are more likely to be told something by the passions that accompany the study of a man's self, than by those of ignorance and imitation.

"The subject of these Memoirs," says our author of the "Life and Times," "was descended from a family, which was renowned from the period of the Conquest; several illustrious persons having figured in the history of England under the name of *Buron*, *Biron*, or *Byron*, which they assumed indiscriminately."

This reminds me of the disputes respecting Lord Byron's pronunciation of his name; some maintaining that he called it Byron, with a short *y*, others Byron with a long one. The truth is, he pronounced it both ways, but in general the former. Captain Medwin says, that in speaking of Lady Byron, he pronounced it, "Byrn;" but this is a mistake. The captain's ear might not have discerned the second vowel, but it was discernable to others. "Byrn" is *Byron*, pronounced shortly, with the northern burr. But he called himself Byron sometimes; and the Italians always called him so; at least, as nearly as they could. They made it *Bairon*, as I have noticed in Madame Guiccioli. Lord Byron was proud of his name, and he had reason to be so. He was also not unwilling to be reminded of his namesake in Shakspeare, and used to mention with pleasure the quotation attributed to Mr. Bowles:

"Biron they call him; but a merrier man  
Within the limits of becoming mirth,  
I never knew.  
His eye begets occasion for his wit.  
While his apt tongue, conceit's expositor," &c.

I quote from memory, and cannot go on; but the passage was not applicable. Lord Byron was sometimes



witty in conversation, often merry, oftener common-place. Conversation, as I have said more than once, was by no means his talent; and none would have thought it so, who had been used to better.

Our author gives us to understand, that Lord Byron did not succeed so well in making love, as ladies succeeded in making love to him. This is true; for reasons which have been explained. But they do not apply to his early love for his cousin Miss Chaworth, which was that of an imaginative boy taking a boyish impulse for a serious passion, and fancying himself bound to be silent and sorrowing. He would have been in love with any other girl that happened to be near him, and have lost her by the same mistake. It was the *Author's* first error,—a mistake out of book. But he imagined the passion, or has since shown that he could imagine it, beautifully, (see his poem of the “Dream;”) and if the lady had been kind, she might probably have warmed his heart into real love, and saved him (as he suspected she might) many a cruel mistake afterwards. As to his literature being in the way, our author is sadly out in his ponderings on that matter:—

“It is a weakness,” (he tells us,) “peculiar to the geniuses of imagination, both male and female, to fancy that they must be *themselves* the objects of that passion which they so fervently describe, whatever may be their personal defects. Literary persons are, however, from their very pursuits, the least qualified to shine in the courts of love. One captain in the Guards will do more execution in an hour with his small *shot* (small talk,) than all the literati of the Chapter Coffee House can effect with their critical great guns in twelve months. Sappho was reduced to take a flying leap to get rid of her disappointed passion. Pope was jeered at by Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and fascinating Jack Musters was too much for poor Lord Byron. *De gustibus nil disputandum*. In fact, a wise man in love becomes a mere fool; and a Cymon becomes intelligent in the presence of his beloved Iphigène.”

What sort of lovers the Literati of the “Chapter Coffee House” may be, it is impossible to say; but that

their literature (if worth any thing) is no obstruction to their love-making, may be seen by the histories of the literati of other coffee-houses, to wit, the Steeles, and Congreves, and Vanbrughs of old. Vanbrugh was a Captain of the Guards, and a favourite of the ladies; but do we suppose that he was less a favourite than any other Captain, because he could talk better, and because his small shot was good as well as small? Sappho was a great poetess; but she might have set her heart upon a person incapable of understanding her, or have exhibited a violence and self-will which belonged to her temperament and not to her wit. One example, or ten, says nothing against the universal opinion in favour of the union of wit and gallantry, and of the effect that even the reputation of wit has upon the fair sex. Pope was deformed, and his letters to Lady Mary partook of the crookedness of which he was conscious. He had not the heart to give his talents fair play, and write in a straightforward manner; and she, being surrounded by handsome wits, and gay fellows about Court, with all their faculties fresh upon them, was not likely to select for her gallant the least handsome of them all, a little misgiving invalid. Lord Byron did not fail, because he was wise or witty, or because a wise man is a fool in love, still less because every fool has the luck of Cymon; but because he was splenetic and moody, and very different from what a man of his wit ought to have been. Does our speculative friend think that the Rochesters and Buckinghamhs always failed in their gallantry?

In the note to p. 98, vol. I. a suspicion is expressed, that Lord Byron and Mr. Hobhouse planned and executed the insurrection of the Greeks, nearly twenty years back! The subtle nod in Italics by which this discovery is conveyed to us, is really agreeable, and gives one a favourable opinion of the author's good-natured credulity.

"Circumstances," says Lord Byron, "*of little consequence to mention*,"\* led Mr. Hobhouse and myself into

\* These "circumstances of little consequence," in which the author has found something of the "utmost consequence," were probably nothing more than a fit of caprice, or the pursuit of a pretty face, or the chances attendant upon navigation. He seems to think that his hero could not put on his hat, but the universe had something to do with it.

that country, before we visited any other part of the Ottoman dominions; and with the exception of Major Leake, then officially resident at Joannina, no other Englishmen have ever advanced beyond the capital into the interior, as that gentleman very lately assured me. Ali Pacha was at that time (1809) carrying on war against Ibrahim Pacha, whom he had driven to Berat, a strong fortress, which he was then besieging. On our arrival at Joannina, we were invited to Tepelene, his Highness's birth-place, and favourite Serai, only one day's journey from Berat; at this juncture the Vizier made it his head-quarters." The author adds, in a note, "It seems extremely probable, that this expression was made use of to conceal the real purport of the journey, as Ali Pacha's subsequent rupture with the Porte was the signal for the breaking out of the Greek insurrection; if so, the journey, was of the *utmost consequence* to the cause of Greece."

"A most material question," says he, "now arises: What could induce two young men of independent fortune to take such a journey by sea and land, and to brave the wilds and banditti of Albania, as rude a country as the interior of Africa, to pay a visit to an infidel, a barbarian, a monster, execrable for every species of villany, and reeking with blood?"

"Why, because he *was* a monster and a show, and because others had travelled in Greece before, especially men from the Universities. Has not our friend learnt, from his intimacy with courts and people of fashion, that nothing is such a godsend to gentlemen full of ennui and fond of notoriety, as a spectacle of any sort, the more monstrous the better? And does he not know, that if Ali had come to the British metropolis, he would have been the rage for the season, and asked out by every great person that could venture on such a liberty, to see how such a very decapitating person drank his coffee and displayed his diamonds? Not to know this, argues him, I fear, still more unknown than he wishes to be. Joannina, the Pacha's capital, was accounted the metropolis of Modern Greece: and besides, Lord Byron, though young, had had experience enough to begin to philosophize; and he probably thought, that many a meek personage whom he



had known in England would have been as savage as Ali, had he been born and bred in the same manner; for Ali was a very soft-spoken gentleman, as quiet as Claverhouse; and, for aught we know, would have made a capital writer in a Scotch magazine.

"Thus," quoth our friend after quoting a couple of stanzas from Childe Harold,—“thus did this *apostle of liberty* preach to the Greeks through eighteen stanzas, and it would seem that neither his planning nor his preaching was in vain.” Poor Lord Byron! He would have been a very unwilling apostle; had he known he was also to be a martyr. He had as little real regard for liberty as Alfieri, or any other proud man of rank; but he had an impatience of any despotism not his own: he had also a great love of fame; and even in that is to be found a link with the social affections, very capable of being turned to good account, if circumstances are favourable.

Speaking of an alleged residence in the island of Mytilene, which Lord Byron denied in a public letter, the author says, “The account is circumstantial; the denial in the letter is positive. If the latter were really written by Lord Byron, he abominated falsehood, and implicit confidence should be placed in his assertion.” Of the residence in the island of Mytilene I know nothing; but as to the abomination of falsehood, Lord Byron once gave a list of the Englishmen he had seen since he left England, and told the public that the list was complete. Mr. Shelley’s name was not in it, and he had seen Mr. Shelley. He had been in habits of intercourse with him.

The mention of Mr. Nathan, the composer, at p. 212, reminds me, that I was present one day in Piccadilly, when that gentleman came to give Lord Byron a specimen of his “Hebrew Melodies.” The noble Bard who was then in the middle of that unpleasant business about his wife, asked him for the one respecting Herod and Mariamne, which he listened to with an air of romantic regret. This was a sort of effect that he liked; nor would it have turned to ill-account, if his rank and worldly connexions could have let him alone. In the very pretence there was a love of something, that might

have become real. Mr. Nathan had a fine head; and made the grand piano-forte shake like a nut shell, under the vehemence of his inspiration.

I remember Polidori, also, who is mentioned at p. 220. He was the son of Polidori, a teacher of Italian, who made some good translations from Milton. Lord Byron engaged the young Doctor to accompany him to Greece. He came in one day, and called about him in a strange manner for water and a towel. Not knowing who he was, I was puzzled to think who it could be, that made himself thus cavalierly at home. Lord Byron looked disconcerted, but was quite mild and acquiescent. I have seen him submit in a similar way to others who did not scruple to avail themselves of this weakness. I have known him even hastily secrete a paper, which he had promised them perhaps not to show. Polidori and he used afterwards to have loud disputes, as if they were equals. He was a foolish, boasting fellow, not perhaps without disease in his blood; and came to an impatient end.

Among the hostile criticisms upon Lord Byron, our author quotes one from "Blackwood's Magazine." The reader remembers the passage in Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World," where a soldier a prisoner for debt, and a porter, are deprecating the consequences of a French invasion. The porter says, the French are a parcel of slaves, fit only to carry burdens; the prisoner that they have no liberty; and the soldier wonders what will become of "our religion."—"May the devil sink me into flames," (such, quoth the Citizen of the World, was the solemnity of his adjuration)—"may the devil sink me into flames, if I can think, my lads, what is to become of our religion." Mr. Blackwood was agitated in like manner respecting the shocking want of piety and Christian charity discernible in his Lordship.

"It has been sufficiently manifest," says he, "that *this man* is devoid of religion." (Sir Walter, by the bye, of "Beacon" fame, must be acquitted of having known any thing of this passage, where a lord is designated so ignobly.) "At times, indeed," pursues Mr. Blackwood, "the power and presence of the Deity, as speaking in sterner wakings of the elements, seems to

force some momentary consciousness of their existence into his labouring breast; a spirit in which there breathes so much of the divine, cannot always resist the majesty of its maker: but of true religion, terror is a small part; and of all religion, that founded on mere terror is the least worthy of such a man as Byron. We may look in vain, through all his works, for the slightest evidence that his soul had ever listened to the *gentle voice* of his oracles. His understanding has been subdued into conviction by some passing cloud; but his heart has never been touched. He has never written one line that savours of the spirit of *meekness*.

Then follows something about charity, and clay-idols, and brutal outrages of all the best feelings; and Mr. Blackwood, having finished his sermon, retires to count his money, his ribaldry, and his kicks.

Our book-making and best-of-every-thing-making author puts as much faith in the celebrated *Farewell* to Lady Byron, as if he had been one of the numerous married ladies who wondered how any body could be cruel to the writer of such charming verses. There never was a greater instance of Lord Byron's authorship and love of publicity than that very poem. He sat down to *imagine* what a husband might say, who had really loved his wife, to a wife who had really loved him; and he said it so well, that one regrets he had not been encouraged, when younger, to feel the genuine passion. But the verses were nothing more. There was no true love on either side, or (without meaning to liken the two modes of conduct) neither could have behaved to the other as both did afterwards. People may say bitter things, who love; the things may even be the bitterer at the moment, because they cannot endure the very dispute that occasions them. Unkind things may be said, precisely because we do not mean them, and because we like to flatter ourselves with observing their effect upon the beloved object. But real lovers do not precede their union with a doubting courtship; still less do they follow it with premature differences, with a hasty separation, with public libels on one side, and unbroken inattention on the other. It is best, surely, that there should have been no love in the case; and being no love, it was best



that the union should be put an end to. As to what a man says on his death-bed, we are first to be certain that he did say it; and next, we are to think what induces him to say it, and whether it is as likely to be his strength as his weakness. Besides, at that affecting moment, a man may feel a tenderness towards all whom he is going to leave, especially those with whom he has been conversant. The writer of the "Life and Times" says, that Lord Byron in his last moments was frequently bursting forth into most affectionate exclamations of "My dear wife! my dear child!" Fletcher, in his narrative, says nothing of the epithet bestowed on the former; and this good-humoured domestic was as believable, I dare say, as any man, when he was not taking himself for a Leporello. I would not be thought to speak lightly of such an occasion, or to speak of it without necessity—quite the reverse. The fact is, that all questions connected with love and marriage are of far deeper concernment, and will one day be thought so, than to suffer any person who has been deeply struck with them, to pass over their consideration at any time, out of fear of being mistaken by the vulgar.

A great many stories are related of Lord Byron in the "Life and Times," for which there is no authority; and unluckily, when a reader meets with such as he knows to be untrue, all the rest go for nothing. In the following account for instance of Madame Guiccioli and her family, there is scarcely a word of truth.

"The Countess of G—— has occasioned some noise both in Italy and England; all the romantic tales of his Lordship taking her out of a convent are fictions; she is no subject for a nunnery. Her father is at the head of an ancient Roman family much reduced in its fortunes; he let out his palace for their support, and Lord Byron by chance occupied it when his daughter was given in marriage to Count G——, an officer poor in every thing but titles. Lord B—— made the bride a liberal present of jewels, and in a short time he became the *locum tenens* of the bridegroom. An amicable arrangement was made; the Count set off to join the army at Naples, newly caparisoned, and the Countess remained under the roof of the noble Lord, where her father acts as regulator of the

household. She is a lovely woman, not more than twenty-two years of age, of a gay, volatile disposition; rides like an Amazon, and fishes, hunts, and shoots with his Lordship. Nature appears to have formed them for each other. She is beloved by all the domestics, and is friendly to every one that wants her aid. She speaks English with propriety, and possesses many accomplishments."

The author here quoted by our friend of the "Life and Times," proceeds to give a marvellous account of a sail from Venice to Ithaca, and of the Countess's pursuit of her noble lover in a small boat, in which, with no other company than a boy, she was tossed about for three days and two nights!

Such are the fictions received into a work professing to be a "full, true, and particular account." It is added in a note, that "Count G—— was actually with Lord Byron when he died, and was one of the committee of four persons appointed by Maurocordato to take care of his property." Here Count Pietro Gamba, the brother of the lady, is confounded with the Cavaliere Guiccioli her husband. Count Gamba the father was not of a Roman, but a Ravenna family. For the liberal present or any other present, of jewels, made by Lord Byron to the bride,—*credat Christianus*,—for nothing but Christian charity can do it; and as to the lady's accomplishments, male as well as female,—hunting, and shooting, and speaking English,—the writer might as well have said, that the boarding-school young ladies in England all go out hunting every morning, and speak Latin to the whippers-in.

But intelligent men, in the very act of discrediting fictions respecting Lord Byron, have shown a tendency to blow up every little spark of their own fancy into a flame and a lustre. M. Beyle, the author of some works justly esteemed, a very sprightly and sometimes no unprofound writer, has given an excellent sketch of Lord Byron, painted from the life, in the midst of which he introduces the following grotesque:—

"He can speak the ancient Greek, the modern Greek, and the Arabian." Of "the Arabian" he did not know a syllable: at least, if he did, I think I should have heard of it during my intercourse with him. Besides, where

was he to pick it up? Probably he knew a few words of the Maltese jargon. Modern Greek he knew more of and might have spoken a little, when he was in Greece,—about as much, perhaps, as ordinary travellers in Italy speak Italian. With the ancient language he was so little conversant, that I doubt whether he could read “Anacreon” without the help of a dictionary. He had lost it, after he left Harrow, as I think he somewhere confesses. He was far from familiar even with any of the Latin writers. It might be said of him with regard to the dead languages, as it was of Shakspeare (and he would have forgiven the truth for the sake of the comparison) that he had “little Latin, and less Greek.” I have little of them myself, having suffered them to slip from me in like manner; but what I do know, I think I know better than he did; and this is saying nothing either to his advantage or mine. I mention this, lest the reader, from what I have said of his want of learning, should receive an undue impression in favour of my own, or think I intended it. Lord Byron, to the best of my recollection, never quoted an ancient author to me but once; which, by-the-way, reminds me of a curious evidence of the childish temper in which he used to indulge himself, to a degree hardly credible. I told him one day, that his majordomo, Lega, had been quoting Latin to me. He said, with all the look of a little boy who has missed a piece of flattery or plum-pudding, “Did he? He never quoted Latin to me.” This was “baby Byron,” as his sister called him. His mistakes in quantity,—such as his calling *redivivus redivivus*—were less evidences perhaps of his want of scholarship, where the word was as common in poetry. Our villainous way of reading Latin and Greek verses, with a contempt of short and long that would have made an ancient split his sides, excuses mistakes of this kind, even in a lover of Horace, not very learned. In short, it would be difficult, in these days of quotations and indexes, to pronounce whether a man was a real scholar or not, unless one has lived with him. Mr. Hobhouse, who writes himself A.M., and loaded his mercurial friend with whole bales of comment, once contended with me, that the accent upon the word *Rimini* ought



to be upon the second syllable, instead of the first;—a comfortable piece of information to give a man, who had just been using the word in public the other way! I had not however been so foolish as to subject myself to the chance of these good-natured suggestions. I had made surety doubly sure by consulting Lucan, and to him I referred my critic, who was convinced and happy.\*

Our author writes like a man of sense on the mistakes committed by Mr. Bowles during the Pope controversy; but with all due deference to the genius of Mr. Campbell, who, though something better than a critic, has written a volume of criticism full of beauties,†—and of Lord Byron, who, though an extraordinary person, was no critic at all,—the only paper that went to the heart of that subject was written by Mr. Hazlitt, in “The London Magazine.” All the others, like the person disputing about theameleon, were at once right and wrong. Lord Byron thought, or pretended to think, that people meant to say Pope was no poet; and in justly vindicating him from that charge, real or supposed, he lost sight of the limits between one kind of poetry and another. Mr. Bowles, on the other hand, in trying to make out that the two kinds had nothing in common, confounded materials with the use of them; and forgot the very soul of poetry he was contending for, in subjecting it to every image it took up. According to him, Nature did not include Art; and a great poet could not handle his stick or his gloves with impunity. But see all this question admirably disentangled, and wound up, in the article by Mr. Hazlitt. As to Pope’s moral character, Mr. Bowles was ridiculous, and something worse. He there sadly forgot both his nature and his art: and only ended with proving himself as inferior to Pope in a social light, notwithstanding his ethics, as he is to him in the amount of his poetry, notwithstanding his poetics.

It is unnecessary to contradict the numberless idle tales which our author proceeds to relate respecting Lord Byron’s adventures. Some of the scenes in which they

\* “Vicinumque minax invadit Ariminum, ut ignes  
Solis Lucifero fugiebant astra relicto.”—*Pharsalia*, lib. i.

† The First Volume of the Specimens of British Poets.

are laid, his Lordship never beheld; and such of the adventures as have a foundation in truth, are mixed up with the most ridiculous fables. Every thing which happens to have come under my own knowledge, is sure to be thus falsified. I do not believe that the compiler wished to say any thing untrue; but he takes care to doubt only what tells against his hero, and swallows implicitly every thing else. On both accounts he is repeatedly committing himself. His scepticism is as warm as his credulity, and gets him into as great mistakes. For instance, from denying that the following verses were sent to Lady Byron (which I believe as little as he does,) he proceeds to abuse what he would otherwise have admired, and discovers that the verses themselves were not written by Lord Byron, which they certainly were. His Lordship repeated them to me himself.

"The reader," says "The Life and Times," "will recollect, that the marriage of Lord and Lady Byron took place on the 2d of January, 1815, and, *if* we may believe the 'Literary Gazette,' his Lordship, on the 2d of January, 1821, sent Lady Byron the following epigram:—

"This day of all hath surely done  
Its worst to me and you;  
'Tis now six years since we were one,  
And five since we were two."

"The reader," continues our biographer, "may choose whether he will believe that Lord Byron could be guilty of so cruel and unmanly an insult, or that some drivelling scribbler has attempted to palm his own Grub-street wit upon the proprietor of 'The Literary Gazette,' as a genuine effusion of the noble Bard. Lord Byron once patronized, but ever afterwards turned his back upon 'The Literary Gazette,' which may account for its enmity."

Now the epigram is not Grub-street wit, and as the reader has seen, was really the production of the "noble Bard." The worst that can be said of it, is the evidence it affords of the way in which he was accustomed to indulge his petulance on a subject he had better have let alone, and his carelessness in letting it get abroad. I remember jokes of his upon others, which I certainly

shall not suffer to transpire, and which he used to defend, by saying that the parties joked in the same manner upon him.

“Now this is worshipful society.”

Our author ventures to think that Lord Byron failed in the drama. His Lordship had a shrewd suspicion of it himself. Speaking one day of a manuscript tragedy of mine, which in our dearth of books he had asked to read, he said he thought it the next best thing I had written, to the “Story of Rimini.” I said, I wished I could think any thing favourable of it, even by courtesy; but I could not. I was quite sure that I had no faculty for the drama. He reflected upon this; and observed, in an under-tone between question and no-question,—“Perhaps I have not succeeded in the drama myself.” I took advantage of the ambiguity of the tone, to make an answer. Had a stranger been present, he might have thought his remark a challenge to be candid, and looked upon my silence as not paying it sufficient honour. I should have thought so once myself; but the time for that delusion was past. Lord Byron was always acting, even when he capriciously spoke the truth. He had hampered himself with sophistications, till he could not break through them; and would have resented the attempt to extricate him, as an assumption of superiority.

At p. 145, vol. ii. is the extraordinary picture I have alluded to respecting an alleged quarrel of mine with Lord Byron. Our author relates it in the following easy and assured style:—

“At Pisa,” quoth he, “an unfortunate difference took place between Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt, of which the following particulars have been derived from one of the parties concerned. ‘Parisina’ was considered by Lord Byron as the best of all his minor poems; in fact, it was the only one he ever could be induced to speak of in company, and when he did so, it was in language that silenced all contradiction: it *was* so,—and it *must* be so, seemed to be the sovereign pleasure of him whose word no man dared to doubt, who wished to retain any particle of his favour. Mr. Snelgrove, lieutenant of l’Eclair, was at Leghorn, and of course a fre-



quent attendant at Pisa at the time that Mr. Leigh Hunt was the constant companion of his Lordship. He noticed him on every occasion, and made him at last so far forget himself, that he considered he had power and ability to criticise the works of his great benefactor. He presumed to censure 'Parisina;' and Mr. Dodd, the Deputy Consul (formerly clerk to Captain Rowley) traced to the pen of Leigh Hunt some criticisms that had appeared in the *Livourna Gazette* and *Lucca* newspaper. Mr. Hunt ought to have been aware how jealous an author is of the darling offspring of his muse, and he ought to have spared the feelings, or, if he pleases, the weaknesses of his friend and benefactor. But wits, like game cocks, never spare each other. From this time, our informant states, that Lord Byron never saw or spoke to Mr. Leigh Hunt, or any of his connexions."

It is worth while to take this grave falsehood to pieces for the sake of the grave truths with which every particle of it can be set aside.

"At Pisa an unfortunate difference took place between Lord Byron and Mr. Leigh Hunt."

There was no difference.

"The following particulars have been derived from one of the parties concerned."

There was no party concerned, except in the invention of the story. Who that was, I cannot say.

"Parisina was considered by Lord Byron as the best of all his minor poems; in fact, it was the only one that he could ever be induced to speak of in company."

By no means. His companions have heard him speak of the others hundreds of times.

"And when he did so, it was in language that silenced all contradiction: it *was* so,—and it *must* be so, seemed to be the sovereign pleasure of him whose word no man dared to doubt, who wished to retain any particle of his favours."

A pretty notion of the tenure by which his friendship was to be held! And a still prettier specimen of the sort of company that affected to be with him on this occasion!

"Mr. Snelgrove, Lieutenant of l'Eclair, was at Leghorn, and *of course* a frequent attendant at Pisa, at the

time that Mr. Leigh Hunt was the constant companion of his Lordship."

Why "of course?" Were all the visiters at Leghorn *duiquietous* of necessity? Or did every man who happened to visit Leghorn at that time, become, as a matter of course, qualified to know every thing respecting Lord Byron and his friends! If it is meant to be said, that the story comes from this Mr. Snelgrove, it is here returned to him, "neat as imported."

"He (Lord Byron) noticed him (*videlicet*, myself) on every occasion, and made him at last so far forget himself, that he considered he had power and ability to *criticise* the works of *his great benefactor!*"

The awful darings and "benefactions" I leave in the reader's hands: but, whatever might have been my "power and ability," another thing was wanting to the criticism; to wit, inclination. I am not accustomed to speak ill of the writings of any body in conversation, and certainly said nothing of them in the instance alluded to.

"He presumed to censure "Parisina," and Mr. Dodd, the Deputy Consul (formerly clerk to Captain Rowley) traced to the pen of Leigh Hunt some criticisms that had appeared in the *Livourna* Gazette and Lucca newspaper."

I never before heard of Mr. Snelgrove the Lieutenant, or Mr. Dodd the former clerk; nor did I ever write any thing about "Parisina," nor any thing in a foreign paper, nor could any criticisms of mine be traced to the "Livourna" or Lucca papers, which Lord Byron himself was not before acquainted with in print. What is remarkable is, that to the best of my recollection I never even read Parisina, nor is this the only one of his Lordship's works, of which I can say as much, acquainted as I am with the others. I never valued any of his minor poems, with the exception of some of the lyrics, and perhaps "Lara," which I recollect thinking the best of his narratives; and I mention this, because I have also a recollection, that he agreed with me in that opinion; though it may have been expressed before the appearance of "Parisina." Whether he liked "Parisina," as they say he did, I cannot tell; nor is it of any conse-

quence. He would have thought it of little consequence himself, knowing his own versatility that way, and what contradictory opinions he would utter both of himself and others, a hundred times in a week. But to proceed.

"Mr. Hunt," quoth our patron of the "Life and Times," "ought to have been aware, how jealous an author is of the darling offspring of his muse, and he ought to have spared the feelings, or, if he pleases, the weaknesses, of his friend and benefactor. But wits, like game cocks, never spare each other. *From this time, our informant states, that Lord Byron never saw or spoke to Mr. Leigh Hunt, or any of his connexions!*"

"*Ex uno,*" as the Captain says, "*disce omnes.*" Perhaps, after all, there are no such persons as Mr. Snelgrove and Mr. Dodd, (Blackwood, the pious dog, makes nothing of inventing a few Lieutenants;) or they may be very respectable people, and know no more of the story than I did a year and a half ago, when I met with the "Life and Times" by chance. I certainly should not have taken the trouble of contradicting it but for the present work. Our biographer may have cut it out with his scissors from some other fictitious narrative, together with the opinions he seems to give upon it; for he is as wonderful an author in his way as Lord Byron, being a great many other writers besides himself.

Idle as this story is, it may have been made use of, for aught I know, to render Lord Byron uneasy in my society. To be sure, he never hinted to me a syllable of any thing of the sort. He knew, if he did, that he should get at the truth, as far as I was concerned. But it is not impossible, that, notwithstanding what he knew of me, his own habit of speaking against his friends might have rendered him doubtful whether circumstances had not provoked me to do as much for him. At all events, being vicious on that score, he was naturally suspicious; and if I took advantage of his weaknesses, others were not so scrupulous. People came to him from as many quarters as there are foolish and envious persons, to try and break up our connexion; and they would not stick at a trifle to effect their purpose.

It would be loss of time, on almost every other sub-



ject, to go on contradicting the heap of absurdities that our compiler has gathered together. But the minutest details respecting Lord Byron have not yet lost their interest with the public: it is useful to show how many falsehoods have been told them; and in contradicting this one publication I contradict twenty others, the scandalous ones included.

Our author has no sooner done with this story, than, as if drunk with credulity, and resolved to keep it up to the last syllable, he goes on compiling and believing at a most glorious rate. There is a favourite passage in the Calvinist hymn-books, which tells the ungodly to stand upon no ceremony in becoming proselytes, not to be ashamed of any contradiction the most barefaced, or to think of waiting to change a rag of their rascality.

“Come wretched, come ragged, come filthy, come bare;  
You can’t come too filthy; come just as you are.”

Just in the same manner our compiler, scissors in hand, calls the gossips and the anonymous writers about him, proposing not even to cast away their rags when they come, but to turn them to account, and preserve every particle of them for their mutual honour and profit;—

“Come writers on Byron, come liars, come fools;  
You can’t come too lying:—come, lend us your tools.”

The account that follows at p. 146, of Lord Byron’s residence at Pisa, was probably some direct invention, made for a magazine at the time, and duly served up hot to the public, after which our author has it cold for his collation.

“Lord Byron, *while at Pisa*, resided near the Leaning Tower, at Signora Dominesia’s, a lady who keeps several small houses,” &c.

Particular rogue! Lord Byron, while at Pisa, lived in the Casa Lanfranchi, a palace in the High Street of that city, called the Lung’Arno. I am not sure whether he might not have put up at some lodging-house for a night or so.

“With the Grand Duke Lord Byron was intimate.”

He never exchanged a word with him. He told me

he had often been given to understand that his presence would have been welcome at Court, and that the Grand Duchess in particular (a princess of the house of Saxony) wished to see him; but that he had an invincible antipathy to going. I believe his lameness alone gave him a dislike to appearing at any Court, setting aside the consideration that might have rendered it unpleasant in Italy, after the connexions he had made with people not in favour—Of the story of the banker, which is connected with this intimacy with the Grand Duke, I know nothing; nor of twenty others selected with the same confidence; but, as I observed before, the fictions with which every thing I do know is mixed up and made absurd, hinder one from taking a particle of any thing else for granted.

“Canova chiselled out four busts for him.” P. 149.

Canova, to the best of my recollection, never did any thing for him. It was Bartolini who made his bust, and very dissatisfied he was with it. He said it made him look old; and could not bear any body to think it like.

“This second time he fixed his quarters at Pisa with a Mrs. Wilson, whose husband had been clerk in a counting-house at Leghorn. With this old lady he frequently strolled.”

He strolled with nobody. Whenever he went out, it was on horseback, or in a carriage. He did not like to be seen walking, on account of his lameness; and besides, it would have put him to bodily pain.

“Lord Byron was every inch an Englishman; a true-born Briton, of so patriotic a spirit,” &c.

He cared nothing at all for England. He disliked the climate; he disliked the manners of the people; he did not think them a bit better than other nations: and had he entertained all these opinions in a spirit of philosophy, he would have been right; for it does not become a man of genius to “give up,” even to his country, “what is meant for mankind.” He was not without some of this spirit; but undoubtedly his greatest dislike of England was owing to what he had suffered there, and to the ill opinion which he thought was entertained of him. It was this that annoyed him in Southey. I believe if he entertained a mean opinion of the talents of

any body, it was of Southey's; and he had the greatest contempt for his political conduct (a feeling which is more common with men of letters than Mr. Southey fancies;\*) but he believed that the formal and the foolish composed the vast body of the middle orders in England; with these he looked upon Mr. Southey as in great estimation; and whatever he did to risk individual good opinion,—however he preferred fame and a “sensation,” at all hazards,—he did not like to be thought ill of by any body of people. Individual opinion he could dare, could provoke, could put to the most mortifying trials, could childishly throw away; but after the publication of *Bepo* and *Don Juan*, and the new popularity they gave him (which I will venture to say was a great surprise to him, and a no less edifying symptom on the part of the British public,) he began to think himself safe again with regard to bodies of society, and was exceedingly enraged to be waked up out of his dream. He fancied that, in turning the laugh against Southey, he should have rendered the public unwilling to hear him; perhaps, have ousted him from the *Quarterly Review*; forgetting, that all which the public care for on these occasions, is what the bye-standers care for, when a ring is made for a couple of boxers. He found that Southey could still write in the “*Quarterly*,” and read him a lecture; and however sure the Laureat was to make the lecture an exposure of his own folly and conceit, there were too many hits in it at his Lordship's weak points not to distress him sorely, and make him mad with vexation at having subjected himself to such an antagonist. However, if he had not the last word, he had the best. All Southey's attacks are common-places and fumes of “*Malvolio*,” compared with the vision of Judgment—the most masterly satire that has appeared since the time of Pope.

Of Lord Byron's defence of “*Cain*,” our author says,

\* I know one of the most eminent writers of the day, not implicated in any violent politics, who looks upon Mr. Southey as at once a half-witted egotist, and something including every offence which he is fond of attributing to others. This opinion is not mine, silly as I hold the Laureat to be in some things, and not half so wise or so good as he takes himself to be in others; but it may serve to show him (if any thing can) that he is not free from as bad a repute with some, as he would cast upon Lord Byron.



that "if it does not wholly exculpate him, it at least proves, that he is less culpable than all the ancient writers of mysteries; than Milton and Goethe;—at all events, that he had no intention of offending morality, or the tender consciences of timid men."

Lord Byron's defence was, that "if 'Cain' was blasphemous, 'Paradise Lost' was blasphemous. 'Cain,'" said he, "was nothing more than a drama, not a piece of argument. If Lucifer and Cain speak as the first rebel and the first murderer may be supposed to speak, nearly all the rest of the personages talk also according to their character; and the stronger passions have ever been permitted to the drama."

This is not sincere. "Cain" was undoubtedly meant as an attack upon the crude notions of the Jews respecting evil and its origin. Lord Byron might not have thought much about the matter, when he undertook to write it; but such was his feeling. He was conscious of it; and if he had not been, Mr. Shelley would not have suffered him to be otherwise. But the case is clear from internal evidence. Milton, in his "Paradise Lost," *intended* nothing against the religious opinions of his time; Lord Byron did. The reader of the two poems feels certain of this; and he is right. It is true, the argumentative part of the theology of Milton was so bad, that a suspicion has crossed the minds of some in these latter times, whether he was not purposely arguing against himself; but a moment's recollection of his genuine character and history does it away. Milton was as decidedly a Calvinist at the time he wrote "Paradise Lost," and subject to all the gloomy and degrading sophistries of his sect, as he certainly altered his opinions afterwards, and subsided in a more *Christian* Christianity. Lord Byron, with a greater show of reason, and doubtless with a genuine wonder (for he reasoned very little on any thing,) asks "what the Methodists would say to Goethe's 'Faust?' His devil," says he, "not only talks very familiarly of heaven, but very familiarly in heaven. What would they think," he continues, "of the colloquies of Mephistophiles and his pupil, or the more daring language of the prologue, which not one of us will venture to translate? And yet this play is not only tolera-

ted and admired, as every thing he wrote must be, but acted in Germany. Are the Germans then a less moral people, than we are? I doubt it."

No: they are not: but they have got beyond us in these speculative matters; at least, as a nation. It is the case with other nations, to whom we set the example as individuals. We have something of the practical indecision of first-thinkers about us. We start a point of knowledge and reformation, and then, out of the very conscience that has forced us to do it, shrink back from pursuing it through its consequences. Lord Byron may well question those as to their right of tolerating Goethe, who, without knowing him thoroughly, will put up with any thing he writes, because he is a foreigner, a great name, and a minister with orders at his button-hole. But Goethe did not write, as Lord Byron did, without knowing his subject and himself, or without being prepared with a succedaneum for the opinions he was displacing,—one, too, that could reconcile those very opinions to the past condition of society, and even connect them and their very contradictions with the nobler views by which they are displaced. Lord Byron was a helper in a cause nobler than he was aware of, and he was not without the comforts of an instinct to that effect; but his unsubdued and unreflecting passions had not allowed him to be properly conscious of it. By the same defect he subjected himself to questions which he could not answer; and because he was not prepared with good arguments, resorted to bad and insincere ones, which deceived nobody.

The world have been much puzzled by Lord Byron's declaring himself a Christian every now and then in some part of his writings or conversations, and giving them to understand in a hundred others that he was none. The truth is, he did not know what he was; and this is the case with hundreds of the people who wonder at him. I have touched this matter before; but will add a word or two. He was a Christian by education: he was an infidel by reading. He was a Christian by habit; he was no Christian upon reflection. I use the word here in its ordinary acceptation, and not in its really Christian and philosophical sense, as a believer in the endeavour and the universality, which are the consummation of

Christianity. His faith was certainly not swallowed up in charity; but his charity, after all, was too much for it. In short, he was not a Christian, in the sense understood by that word; otherwise he would have had no doubts about the matter, nor (as I have before noticed) would he have spoken so irreverently upon matters in which no Christian of this sort indulges license of speech. Bigoted Christians of all sects take liberties enough, God knows. They are much profaner than any devout Deist ever thinks of being; but still their profanities are not of a certain kind. They would not talk like Voltaire, or say with Lord Byron, that upon Mr. Wordsworth's showing, "Carnage must be Christ's sister."\*

P. 336, vol. ii. "There is no man, nor well educated woman in Italy, that cannot quote all the finer passages of the favourite author (Dante.)" (A great mistake.) "The Guiccioli could repeat almost all the Divine Comedy."—Three volumes of stern writing about Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise! *Credat Medwin!* I remember very well, that his Lordship's fair friend was quite horrified at the poem of Andrea di Basso, a writer of a Dantesque order of mind, quoted in the "Indicator." It was addressed to the corpse of a proud beauty. Lord Byron showed it her to enjoy her impatience. She was quite vexed and mortified, and wondered how I could translate so shocking an author.†

\* Mr. Wordsworth says in his "Thanksgiving Ode for the Battle of Waterloo," that "Carnage is God's daughter."

"But thy most dreaded instrument,  
In working out a pure intent  
Is man, arrayed for mutual slaughter;  
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter."

How poor and wilful, how presumptuous, and at the same time mis-giving,—how full of a pretended right to say the boldest and most shocking things unexplained, in the very vindication of meekness and humility, and to let us think what we please of it, because he has might and orthodoxy on his side,—is this sullen ebullition, this thump of a doubtful fist on a pulpit-cushion, compared with the kindly and noble exposition which Goethe would have given us of the possible necessity of past warfare, in one of his transcendent allegories! The more I know of Goethe, and think of the Lake poets, the more I see how much they have owed to him, and how ill they have understood it.

† As Andrea de Basso is not easily to be met with, the reader is presented with a specimen of what frightened the lady:



Vol. ii. p. 355. "Byron's vanity, or to give it a milder and perhaps more appropriate term, his love of fame, was excessive; but it was erroneous, as well as un-

"Risorga dalla tomba avara e lorda  
La putrida tua salma, o donna cruda,  
Or che di spirto nuda  
E cieca e muta e sorda  
Ai vermi dai pastura;  
E da la prima altura  
Da fiera morte scossa  
Fai tuo letto una fossa.  
Notte, continua notte,  
Ti divora ed inghiotte;  
E la puzza ti smembra  
Le sì pastose membra,  
E ti stai fitta, fitta per dispetto,  
Come animal immondo al laccio stretto.

"Vedrai se ognun di te mettrà paura,  
E fuggira come garzon la sera  
Da l'ombra lunga e nera  
Che striscia per le mura;  
Vedrai se a la tua vose  
Cedran le alme pietose;  
Vedrai se al tuo invitare  
Alcun vorrà cascare;  
Vedrai se seguiranti  
Le turbe de gli amanti,  
E se il di porterai  
Per dove passerai,  
O pur se spargerai tenebre e lezzo,  
Tal che a ti stessa verrai in disprezzo."

Rise from the loathsome and devouring tomb,  
Give up thy body, woman without heart,  
Now that its worldly part  
Is over; and deaf, blind, and dumb,  
Thou servest worms for food,  
And from thine altitude  
Fierce death has shaken thee down, and thou dost fit  
Thy bed within a pit.  
Night, endless night hath got thee,  
To clutch and to englut thee;  
And rottenness confounds  
Thy limbs and their sleek rounds,  
And thou art stuck there, stuck there in despite,  
Like a foul animal in a trap at night.

Come in the public path and see how all  
Shall fly thee, as a child goes shrieking back  
From something long and black,  
That mocks along the wall.  
See if the kind will stay  
To hear what thou would'st say;

generous, to attribute to him so inordinate a thirst for it, as to wish to monopolise it all to himself. It has been stated that he was exorbitantly desirous of being the sole object of interest, whether in the circle in which he was living, or in the wider sphere of the world; he could bear no rival; he could not tolerate the person who attracted attention from himself; he instantly became animated with a bitter interest, and hated, for the time, every greater or more celebrated man than himself. He carried his jealousy up even to Buonaparte; and it was the secret of his contempt of Wellington. It was dangerous for his friends to rise in the world; if they valued not his friendship more than their own fame, he hated them. All this is a gross misrepresentation."

There is a great deal of truth in it.

"Eager as was his appetite for fame, the consciousness of his own excellence set him above the meanness of envy or jealousy; and he was ever ready to give every candidate for popularity his due share of merit."

A mistake, as I have shown before. It is the same with his jealousy. But the above passages have suggested a farther remark or two. I believe he would not have been so jealous, had he not taken it for a strength, instead of a weakness, to give way to every thing in the extreme. He might have allowed it to be a weakness in one sense; but he thought these kind of excesses indicative of greatness; and out of the concession, the vindication, or whatever else it might be according to circumstances, he extracted, above all, food for his love of astonishing. Southey hit him rightly there. He did not care what he did to astonish the world, but then he was shocked if the world did not think the best of it. He thought they would, because *he* did it; and was much mortified to discover, that every body, whose good word he thought

See if thine arms can win  
One soul to think of sin;  
See if the tribe of wooers  
Will now become pursuers;  
And if where they make way,  
Thou 'lt carry, now, the day;  
Or whether thou wilt spread not such foul night,  
That thou thyself shall feel the shudder and the fright."

worth having, was not of that opinion. He then, in his spleen, was for thinking himself unjustly diminished in reputation; and so he went on, between excessive confidence and resenting doubt, playing the spoiled child of fame, and alternately lording it over the public, or sulking in a corner. I have no doubt he was jealous at times of every body who interested the world; but as he thought nobody really greater than himself, he became reconciled the next minute, and could like the favourites of the public, and relish their works as much as any body, partly because their acceptance of the world reminded him of his own greater acceptance. For this reason, he was not so jealous of writers whom he thought popular, as of some, Mr. Wordsworth for instance, whose claims he could not so well define, and who, he suspected, might turn out some day or other to be the greater men. In his anxiety, also to identify his admirers with those who conferred existing reputation, he was as anxious to acknowledge the merits of all the writers in fashion, as he was careful of not committing himself with the rest. All his public praises, it is to be observed, were bestowed upon Scott, Moore, Campbell, and others, not excepting Rogers; in short, every body who pleased "the town." In his eulogies of these, he was warm. Shelley he did not dare to acknowledge, even as a visiter. Keats he would never have said a word of, had he not discovered, that the author of "Hyperion," besides being dead, was an admirer of "Don Juan;" and then he was afraid of committing himself too much. He must couple his good word with a sarcasm. His latter connexion with myself arose out of circumstances; out of the secret influence that Shelley had over him, his immediate quarrel with his publishers and advisers, and his hope of getting money, and striking a new blow that should astonish both friends and enemies. But this I have explained before. Connected with me or not, he would never have said a word to my advantage unless we had carried all before us, and the coteries themselves had been conquered. He was so cautious of turning the public attention upon any body whom he considered as not in fashion, and at the same time so jealous of being thought indebted to any such person for a hint, that he was disconcerted at the



mention I made, in "The Liberal," of the *Specimen of an intended National Poem*, since called, *The Monks and the Giants*, the precursor of "Beppo" and "Don Juan." In vain had "Don Juan" avoided the mistake which hindered the Specimen from succeeding: in vain it was, in every sense of the word, a greater work: and in vain, great as it was, were the readers of Italian aware, that twenty poems existed in that language, which hindered it from being an original in point of style. He did not like that any thing should be mentioned, which deprived him of a particle of fame, well or ill grounded. A reference to the Specimen did not please him: I doubt whether he was not sorry that a specimen of Ricciardetto was given at the same time; and (with the exception of Coleridge, who had visited and complimented him, and whom he thought too unpopular to be made otherwise) the only instance in which I ever knew him to volunteer the mention of an author, not in repute, or to recommend it to another, was a request he made me to speak well, on the same occasion, of Lord Glenbervie's translation of the First Canto of that Poem!—an honour to "The Liberal," to the "National Poem," and to myself, which I was obliged to decline. Lord Glenbervie, who, I believe, was a very good old gentleman, had done two good things in the eyes of his recommender; he had quoted a couplet of "Don Juan," and written a harmless version.—Such were the little things, which Lord Byron, in his false estimate of human nature; thought it great to do.

At p. 20, vol. iii. is a pleasant letter from an American,—one of the best that has been written about Lord Byron, and describing him in one of his pleasantest moments. I have explained why he was partial to the Americans, and felt at his ease in their company.

....."I intend to visit America as soon as I can arrange my affairs in Italy. Your morals are much purer than those of England (*there*, says the American, *I laughed*;) those of the higher classes of England are become very corrupt (*I smothered my laugh*.) Do you think, if I were to live in America they would ever make me a Judge of the Ten Pound Court?"

Upon this passage our compiler says, "Whether or

not Brother Jonathan intended to quizz Lord Byron, it seems pretty evident that his Lordship was quizzing Brother Jonathan. His expressing a doubt whether the Americans would make him a Judge of the Ten Pound Court, conveyed his Lordship's opinion, that literary merit met with but very poor encouragement in the United States; and when he talked of their morals being much purer than those of England, Brother Jonathan laughed, and well he might; for, take the United States, from northward to southward (we speak of the coast, not of the inland parts, there is not more licentiousness to be found in any part of England, not excepting those sinks of vice, the sea-port towns of Plymouth, Portsmouth, or the Wapping district of London. A residence of some years, in all those eastern parts of the United States, authorizes us to speak pretty decidedly on that point."

"Now Brother Jonathan" did not laugh because the Americans were more or less moral than the English, but because Lord Byron talked about morals at all. He thought it was like a bon-vivant shaking his head at the gourmands. His Lordship, however, affected nothing on that point. He might have appeared to over-do the gravity of his ethics, and to intend something mock-heroical; but he was as little in the habit of defending his own morals, as he did those of high life in general. He philosophized very ill upon both. On the latter he was accustomed to express himself very broadly. I have heard him say many times, that for all their farce-making, the morals of the English aristocracy were not a whit better than those of France or any other nation. At the same time it must be recollected, that he had not been in the habit of associating with the staid part of it. Nevertheless, I believe it will not be denied by any body acquainted with the world, that the upper classes are still less restrained in their conduct on certain points, than their countrymen suppose them to be. The truth is, that leisure, luxury, and the cultivation of the graces, naturally tend to a relaxation of the received notions of morality; and hypocrisy being more immediately convenient than plain-dealing, and therefore in the long run pronounced necessary (which is an opinion prevalent in more classes than one,) it is not considered how far the

notions themselves might be improved and rendered harmless (as in the case, for instance, of a greater facility of divorce,) but education teaching one thing and custom another, the conscience and the heart become injured; and intrigue in high life has ultimately the same ill effect in producing false and melancholy impressions of human nature, as tricks of trade do among the middle classes. "But how is the world to be altered?" cry both classes—"It is the same as it has ever been, and as it ever will be." Is it so? *That*, I suspect, is more than you or I can tell. Oh profound, ancient, sure and unalterable world, that have a history at least four thousand years old, (a mighty sum in eternity!) and are all as naked as savages, and have not altered a jot of your customs since polygamy was in fashion, and children were offered to Moloch!—It is as idle to talk of the unalterableness of any thing human, as it is of the necessity of falsehood. What have become of our own previous customs,—hundreds of them? Of the conjugal strictness of the Italians? Of the rack and the inquisition? Of Popery in England, king-worship in France, and hopelessness in South America? There is a sect among us (the Moravians,) whose tradesmen will not tell a lie upon any consideration, even about a stocking or a Dutch doll. These people do not get a jot the less money than other tradesmen. It is possible, though not very likely, considering the rarity of the thing, that they may be slower in getting it; but they are sure, for so is the purchaser; and they do not spoil, by the way, the enjoyments they look to, because they retain that lively sense of their own worth, which continues them in a good opinion of others and of existence.

But I digress.—"Lord Byron," says the author of the "Thousand and One Byronian bites," vol. iii. p. 36, "was wandering, during the autumn of the year 1822, on the eastern shores of Italy, without any settled determination where to take up his winter quarters, when chance brought him into the town of Vado, and the Blossom, British sloop-of-war, into the bay, where she anchored. The captain landed, and as he entered the hotel, met with Lord Byron, and recognized him through the disguise of a mountain farmer, with a fowling-piece under his arm. They were old friends; and the meeting



on both sides was cordial and sincere. Captain Stewart spent several days on the mountains with his friend, who lodged at a farm-house, perfectly *incog.* and attended only by one Italian servant.

"The Blossom, it was intended, should remain for some months at Genoa to protect the British maritime rights, and proceed to Smyrna in the Spring with a convoy. Lord Byron agreed to accompany and pass the winter in the same place in the society of his newly found friend; they arrived at Genoa without accident, and his Lordship fixed himself in one wing of an ancient palace, situated in that part of the city called the 'Mount of Albaro,' distant from the noise of the port and disagreeable effluvia of the markets."

Not a word of truth in this. He was living quietly at Albaro, as little wandering, or able to wander, as need be; but studying, it is true, how he might contrive to wander. Our compiler is in one of his highest states of the believing, in this part of his work. He proceeds to extract from a magazine one of the few letters about Lord Byron that are worth any thing; and then undertakes to convict it of a series of mistakes, by a series of the most extraordinary mistakes of his own. The letter (to complete the curiosity of it) appeared in "Blackwood's Magazine,"—a strange place in which to recognize my old schoolfellow who wrote it—but he is a good fellow, and has a right to his universalities. What is more curious, and shows the absorbing effect which Lord Byron's position in society had upon all classes, is, that one of the few remarks which his visiter has recorded, and which he looks upon as an evidence of his Lordship's aristocracy, was made by myself. It is the one upon Cobbett.

"From the cause of the Spaniards," says the writer (whom by the way I had introduced to Lord B.) "the conversation directed itself to the cause of the Greeks, and the state paper of the Holy Alliance upon this subject also was brought upon the carpet. Cobbett's name was introduced, and the aristocratic poet's observation was too striking to be forgotten. 'I should not like to see Cobbett presiding at a revolutionary green-table, and to be examined by him; for, if he were to put ten questions to me, and I should answer nine questions satis-

factorily, but were to fail in the tenth—for that he would send me to the *lantern*.”

The following passage is added here, both because it touches upon a point which has excited attention, and because it refers to a body of men who have given rise to less of the *odium theologicum* than any other priesthood on record.

“Lord Byron then turned to me, and asked, ‘are you not afraid of calling upon such an excommunicative heretic as myself? If you are an ambitious man, you will never get on in the Church after this.’ I replied that he was totally mistaken, if he fancied there was any such jealous or illiberal spirit at home; and he instantly interrupted me, by saying, ‘Yes, yes, you are right—there is a great deal of liberal sentiment among Churchmen in England, and that is why I prefer the Established Church of England to any other in the world. I have been intimate, in my time, with several clergymen, and never considered our difference of opinion was any bar to our intimacy. They say I am no Christian, but I am a Christian.’ I afterwards asked Mr.—— what his Lordship meant by an assertion so much in contradiction with his writings, and I was told that he often threw out random declarations of this kind, without any meaning.”

The Mr. —— here omitted in the magazine, is myself. How much ought I not to have been elevated and surprised, when I found, by the pages of my friend of the “Life and Times,” that besides being myself, I was also “Colonel Burr, formerly Vice-President of the United States,” and that I had “unfortunately killed General Hamilton in a duel, many years ago!” What an elegant load on my conscience is here! My friend also, who was with me, besides being the Rev. Mr. G——, as legitimate a son in every sense of the word as can be found, was, it seems, the Reverend Mr. J., or “Johnson; a natural son of Lord Hampden!” There is no knowing how many people one is to be, before one dies. I have been, in my time, almost all the Hunts that have been talked of; besides being, at the same instant, a tall man and a short, a man with black hair and a man with white, a fop and a sloven, a gentleman and no gen-

tleman, a sayer of things I never said, and a doer of deeds never done; and now, in 1822, it appears I was a civil person and a colonel, and that I went to see Lord Byron with a legitimate natural son of the Rev. Mr. G. and my Lord Hampden!

The letter written by this twofold clergyman (who should have taken the opportunity of enriching our language with the dual number) is, our compiler informs us, "in many points very correct," but "requires explanation where he alludes to subjects of which he is ignorant only from hearsay." Accordingly, he tells us, that the palace in which Lord Byron lived on the hill of Albaro, was once the abode of the celebrated Andrew Doria, Doge of Genoa; Lord Byron, as he observes, a few pages farther, having a "strong partiality for fixing his abode in ancient chateaus of romantic celebrity."

That is to say, Doria's residence in the palace is made for the occasion. If Lord Byron lived in a palace at Genoa, it must, or ought, or he wished it to have been, Doria's: therefore it *was* Doria's; which it unfortunately was not. It was the Saluzzi palace, as I have mentioned before; and was celebrated for nothing but for his Lordship's living in it.

At p. 51 of the same volume, is a romantic account of a little groom and his Lordship, riding about Genoa in fantastic dresses. It is worth quoting, inasmuch as it shows the vulgar melodramatic idea entertained of Lord Byron. "This youth," we are told, was dressed in a livery, not unlike the Robin Hood archers: a green coat, and hat flopped down on the right shoulder, the rim on the left being fastened up to the crown by a buckle and black feather. When they rode out into the country, he had a pouch and powder-horn by his side, and a carbine slung at his back. His lordship wore his usual travelling dress, which we have had occasion before to notice, of brown waistcoat and trowsers, with large silver buttons, buff coloured boots, white hat, morocco belt and daggers, and a loose flowing green robe, studded by a small silver star in front. The pair were unique at Genoa, and created some surprise, which made Lord Byron, when he sallied forth, proceed at full gallop through the city; and to avoid, on the high-road, a religious caval-



cade, of which there were many every day, he would clap spurs to his horse, and leaping the first fence near, ride over the fields and through the vineyards, till he had cut them, and then he returned to the high-road again. He had several times to pay for these trespasses, and always submitted to it with good-humour."

Brown and silver, buff-coloured boots, a green cloak, and a star! And this was his "usual travelling dress;" and then, in order to avoid being stared at, which could have been his only object in wearing it, he would leap his horse over the fences, and ride over the fields and vineyards! If he had, he would have got knocked over the head. It is unnecessary to tell any body, except Mr. Southey and the little boys who go to the Circus, that Lord Byron performed no such feats, and wore no such dress. Furthermore, he had no servants at Genoa, but his old ones, and there are no fences there—there are only walls.

The falsehoods now thicken so, that to contradict them would be to contradict almost every page in the book. This is the case, at least, to my knowledge, in every thing in which Italy is concerned; and the conclusion, respecting what is said of Greece, is a natural consequence. The fêtes at Genoa, the walking arm-in-arm with mysterious old gentlemen, the walking at all, the charities to public hospitals, the frequentations of ships of war, with a thousands *etceteras*, all are false. To refute them, for refutation sake, would be a ludicrous waste of time. My object is to take notice of such passages only, as suggest something either of contradiction or recollection, capable of adding to Lord Byron's real history: I shall, therefore, take leave of the Tempora and Mores of our friend of the "Life and Times," by extracting, first, a summary of the noble Bard's character in his highest, most satisfied, and most convincing style; and secondly, a character of the biography itself, worthy of all the rest, and self-evident to a degree of the dazzling. It is only a pity, that in addition to the list of Lord Byron's accomplishments, he did not mention, that besides being "a scholar," and "a rock," and "a reed shaken by the wind," he was a ratcatcher and the Pope's grandson; and that in recording the truth of his biography, he did not

subjoin the certificate from the Lord Mayor usual on such occasions.

“The life of a scholar,” says our author, quoting Dr. Johnson, “abounds not with adventure;” in this he spoke from his own experience, and, during his day, men of learning were not to be found: or, indeed, looked for, amongst the great and titled. The life of Lord Byron comprises a little of every thing; he was at once a *nobleman*, (a sufficient passport to fame, without even ability or genius to recommend any one to notice)—he was an *accomplished gentleman*, quite enough to make all he said acceptable in genteel society—he was an *admirer* of the fair sex, a virtue (I must call it so) that, at all events, ensured him the smiles of those for whom poets, painters, and heroes, live, labour, and die;—he was a *profound scholar*; that ensured him the estimation of all men of genius,—he was a man of *dramatic ability*; this ensured him celebrity amongst buskined enthusiasts—he was a *moral man*; that ought to have commanded the praise of religious minds—he was a bard, unequalled since the days of Shakspeare, and this made every British heart-pulse throb with pride at his name—he was a lover of *constitutional liberty*; as such he was revered by men of liberal principles—he was a *traveller*, a wanderer, an exile, a man of blighted hopes, and blasted fortunes; at times, a reed shaken by the wind, or a rock of adamant, according as noble pride or tender passion moved him—his variety of character, the rapid successions of lights and shades that obscured and illumined all his actions, fixed the attention of mankind; and whilst the blaze of his genius seemed to raise him in our estimation to Heaven, his errors reduced him to a level with earthly beings; and we feel a consolatory exultation in thinking that he was one of us, though so pre-eminent in talents, that we may say,

‘He was a man, take him for all in all,  
We ne’er shall look upon his like again.’

“These observations are here introduced, merely because they occur at the moment, from a contemplation of particular circumstances in which Lord Byron was engaged. As an excuse for want of connexion in events,

we have two precedents, one legal and strong, the other light and amusing, viz. Montesquieu and Boswell: the former made his *Spirit of the Laws* agreeable, from being pursued in no settled form; and Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is admired, because it is 'a thing of shreds and patches,' where something must suit every one's taste; but in point of fact, Byron's life was

' Ever charming, ever new:  
When will the landscape tire the view!'

And be it remembered by the reader, that the biographer has nought in view but plain truth."

In reading such things as these, and thinking that they sell, one almost ceases to look upon the pathetic epithet bestowed on the public in the Rejected Addresses, as a touch of humour. The existing British community, after all, are really and truly a "pensive public," mightily given to a maudlin credulity and the most villanous compounds. See how melancholy it walks out on Sundays! What a solemn roar there is in its laughter in the theatre,—grave and unsocial all the rest of the time, and letting the women stand! See with what avidity it entertains a prize-fight, a mad bull, or a scandalous magazine, which it affects to despise all the while! Any thing to give it a sensation, and make it think well of itself, and of humoursome people like it, at the expense of its neighbours. Aristophanes would have made fine work of it, had it been as good-humoured as the Athenian public; but your *gens tristes* are apt to be savage. Every other public, Athenian or French, is to be laughed at but themselves. Bring home the joke against the English to their own doors, high or low; and instead of laughing, they send for the constable or the Attorney-General. These matters, however, are mending; and if Mr. Canning's politics can be kept up, the popular blood has a chance of being sweetened. John Bull, to say the truth, has not been a very pleasant fellow, ever since he *was* John Bull, and took to being a bad, bolt-headed sort of Dutchman, which was about the time the name was first given him. It is high time that he should know the better sort of persons of all countries for what they are, Dutch, French, or Italian; and be as lively and liberal,



as he tended to be of old, and as he has quite enough knowledge to make him. Mr. Southey, in a fit of ungrateful spleen, (for John has listened to his epics,) degraded him from his title of Bull, into one which he would have accused me of indecency for mentioning; though of the two I surely have the greater right, and that which is indecent in the cold and gross Laureat, would be another thing out of my West Indian mouth. But our friend, the public, if he knew his own powers, and would do himself justice, deserves neither the one title nor the other. The more he listens to such washy antiques as Mr. Southey, the more they will cheat him one minute, and insult him the next. They want him to know as little, to say as little, and to share as little, as possible: they, in the mean while, reading him to sleep, picking his pockets, and laughing at his person. On the contrary, let him learn all he can, compare all the notes, and ask all the questions possible, taking nothing for granted, and he will ultimately enjoy all he ought, which is more than the heroes of Mr. Southey's Book of the Church desire him to do, (though they have been all mightily bent on it themselves,) and a good deal more. Lord Byron has been too much admired by the public, because he was sulky and wilful, and reflected in his person their own love of dictation and excitement. They owe his memory a greater regard, and would do it much greater honour, if they admired him for telling them they were not so perfect a nation as they supposed themselves, and that they might take as well as give lessons of humanity, by a candid comparison of notes with civilization at large.

# LETTERS OF LORD BYRON

TO

**MR. LEIGH HUNT.**

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[AFTER what I have related of the intercourse between Lord Byron and myself, it will not be supposed that these letters are published with any other view than that of the entertainment to be derived from the correspondence of a man of wit and celebrity. Had I wished to flatter my vanity, or make a case out for myself in any way, I might have published them long ago. I confess I am not unwilling to let some readers see how ill-founded were certain conjectures of theirs at that time. In other respects, I fear, the letters are not calculated to do me good; for they exhibit his Lordship in a pleasanter light than truth has obliged me to paint him, and I may seem to be ungrateful for many kind expressions. Let the result be what it ought to be, whether for me or against. I have other letters in my possession, written while Lord Byron was in Italy, and varying in degrees of cordiality, according to the mood he happened to be in. They are for the most part on matters of dispute between us; and are all written in an uneasy, factitious spirit, as different from the straight-forward and sincere-looking style of the present, as his aspect in old times varied with his later one.]

## LETTER I.

4, Bennet-Street, Dec. 2d, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

Few things could be more welcome than your note; and on Saturday morning I will avail myself of your permission to thank you for it in person. My time has not been passed, since we met, either profitably or agreeably. A very short period after my last visit, an incident occurred, with which, I fear, you are not unacquainted, as report in many mouths and more than one paper was busy with the topic. That naturally gave me much uneasiness. Then, I nearly incurred a lawsuit on the sale of an estate; but that is now arranged: next—but why should I go on with a series of selfish and silly details? I merely wish to assure you that it was not the frivolous forgetfulness of a mind occupied by what is called pleasure (*not* in the true sense of Epicurus) that kept me away; but a perception of my *then* unfitness to share the society of those whom I value and wish not to displease. I hate being *larmoyant*, and making a serious face among those who are cheerful.

It is my wish that our acquaintance, or, if you please to accept it, friendship, may be permanent. I have been lucky enough to preserve some friends from a very early period, and I hope, as I do not (at least now) select them lightly, I shall not lose them capriciously. I have a thorough esteem for that independence of spirit which you have maintained with sterling talent, and at the expense of some suffering. You have not, I trust, abandoned the poem you were composing when Moore and I partook of your hospitality in y<sup>e</sup> summer? I hope a time will come when he and I may be able to repay you in kind for the *latter*;—for the rhyme, at least in *quantity*, you are in arrear to both.

Believe me very truly  
and affectionately yours,  
BYRON.



## LETTER II.

Dec. 22, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am indeed “in your debt”—and, what is still worse, am obliged to follow *royal* example, (he has just apprized *his* creditors that they must wait till y<sup>e</sup> meeting,) and entreat your indulgence for, I hope, a very short time. The nearest relation and almost y<sup>e</sup> only friend I possess, has been in London for a week, and leaves it to-morrow with me for her own residence.—I return immediately; but we meet so seldom, and are so *minuted* when we meet at all, that I give up all engagements till *now*, without reluctance. On my return, I must see you to console myself for my past disappointments. I should feel highly honoured in Mr. B——’s permission to make his acquaintance, and *there* you are in *my* debt—for it is a promise of last summer which I still hope to see performed. Yesterday I had a letter from Moore:—you have probably heard from him lately; but if not, you will be glad to learn that he is the same in heart, head, and health.

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## LETTER III.

Feb. 9, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been snow-bound and thaw-swamped (two compound epithets for you) in the “valley of the shadow” of Newstead Abbey for nearly a month, and have not been four hours returned to London. Nearly the first use I make of my benumbed fingers, is to thank you for your very handsome note in the volume you have just put forth; only, I trust, to be followed by others on subjects more worthy your notice than the works of contemporaries. Of myself, you speak only too highly—and you must think me strangely spoiled, or perversely peevish,

even to suspect that any remarks of yours in the spirit of candid criticism could possibly prove unpalatable. Had they been harsh, instead of being written as they are in the indelible ink of good sense and friendly admiration—had they been the harshest—as I knew and know that you are above any personal bias, at least *against* your fellow bards—believe me, they would not have caused a word of remonstrance, nor a moment of rankling on my part. Your poem\* I *reddet*† long ago in the “Reflector,” and it is not much to say it is the best “*session*” we have—and with a more difficult subject—for we are neither so good nor so bad (taking the best and worst) as the wits of the olden time.

To your smaller pieces, I have not yet had time to do justice by perusal—and I have a quantity of unanswered, and, I hope, unanswerable letters to wade through before I sleep; but to-morrow will see me through your volume. I am glad to see you have tracked Gray among the Italians. You will perhaps find a friend or two of yours there also, though not to the same extent; but I have always thought the Italians the only poetical moderns:—our Milton and Spenser, and Shakspeare, (the last, through translations of their tales) are very Tuscan, and surely it is far superior to the French school. You are hardly fair enough to Rogers—why “*tea?*” You might surely have given him supper—if only a sandwich. Murray has, I hope, sent you my last bantling, “The Corsair.” I have been regaled at every inn on the road by lampoons and other merry conceits on myself in the ministerial gazettes, occasioned by the republication of two stanzas inserted in 1812, in Perry’s paper.‡ The hysterics of the Morning Post are quite interesting; and I hear (but have not seen) of something terrific in a last week’s Courier—all which I take with “the calm indifference” of Sir Fretful Plagiary. The Morning Post has one copy of devices upon my deformity, which certainly will admit of no “historic doubts,” like “Dickon my master’s”—another upon my Atheism, which is not quite so clear—and another, very down-

\* “The Feast of the Poets.”

‡ Morning Chronicle.

† *Sic MS.*

rightly, says I am the *devil*, (*boiteux* they might have added,) and a rebel and what not:—possibly my accuser of diabolism may be Rosa Matilda; and if so, it would not be difficult to convince her I am a mere man. I shall break in upon you in a day or two—distance has hitherto detained me; and I hope to find you well and myself welcome.

Ever your obliged and sincere,

BYRON.

P.S. Since this letter was written, I have been at your text, which has much *good* humour in every sense of the word. Your notes are of a very high order indeed, particularly on Wordsworth.

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#### LETTER IV.

October 15th, 1814.

MY DEAR HUNT,

I send you some game, of which I beg your acceptance. I specify the quantity as a security against the porter; a hare, a pheasant, and two brace of partridges, which, I hope, are fresh. My stay in town has not been long, and I am in all the agonies of quitting it again next week on business, preparatory to “a change of condition,” as it is called by the talkers on such matters. I am about to be married; and am, of course, in all the misery of a man in pursuit of happiness. My intended is two hundred miles off; and the efforts I am making with lawyers, &c. &c. to join my future connexions, are, for a personage of my single and inveterate habits,—to say nothing of indolence,—quite prodigious! I sincerely hope you are better than your paper intimated lately; and that your approaching freedom will find you in full health to enjoy it.

Yours, ever,

BYRON.



## LETTER V.

13, Piccadilly Terrace, May—June 1st, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,

I am as glad to hear from as I shall be to see you. We came to town, what is called late in the season; and since that time, the death of Lady Byron's uncle (in the first place,) and her own delicate state of health, have prevented either of us from going out much; however, she is now better, and in a fair way of going creditably through the whole process of beginning a family.

I have the alternate weeks of a private box at Drury Lane Theatre; this is my week, and I send you an admission to it for Kean's nights, Friday and Saturday next, in case you should like to see him quietly:—it is close to the stage—the entrance by the private box-door—and you can go without the bore of crowding, jostling, or dressing. I also enclose you a parcel of recent letters from Paris; perhaps you may find some extracts, that may amuse yourself or your readers. I have only to beg you will prevent your copyist, or printer, from mixing up any of the *English* names, or *private* matter contained therein, which might lead to a discovery of the writer; and as the Examiner is sure to travel back to Paris, might get him into a scrape, to say nothing of his correspondent at home. At any rate, I hope and think the perusal will amuse you. Whenever you come this way, I shall be happy to make you acquainted with Lady Byron, whom you will find any thing but a fine lady—a species of animal which you probably do not affect more than myself. Thanks for y<sup>e</sup> Mask;—there is not only poetry and thought in the body, but much research and good old reading in your prefatory matter. I hope you have not given up your narrative poem, of which I heard you speak as in progress. It rejoices me to hear of the well-doing and regeneration of the “Feast,” setting aside my own selfish reasons for wishing it success. I fear you stand almost single in your liking of “Lara;” it is natural that *I* should, as being my last and most unpopular

effervescence:—passing by its other sins, it is too little narrative, and too metaphysical to please the greater number of readers. I have, however, much consolation in the exception with which you furnish me. From Moore I have not heard very lately. I fear he is a little humorous, because I am a lazy correspondent; but that shall be mended.

Ever your obliged,  
And very sincere friend,

BYRON.

P. S. "Politics!" The barking of the war-dogs for their carrion has sickened me of them for the present.

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## LETTER VI.

13, Terrace, Piccadilly, Oct. 7th, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,

I had written a long answer to your last, which I put into the fire, partly, because it was a repetition of what I have already said—and next, because I considered what my opinions are worth, before I made you pay double postage, as your proximity lays you within the jaws of the tremendous "Twopenny," and beyond the verge of franking—the only parliamentary privilege (saving one other) of much avail in these "costermonger days."

Pray don't make me an exception to the "Long live King Richard" of your bards in "the Feast." I do allow him to be "prince of the bards of his time," upon the judgment of those who must judge more impartially than I probably do. I acknowledge him as I acknowledge the Houses of Hanover and Bourbon—the—not the "one-ey'd monarch of the blind," but the blind monarch of the one-eyed. I merely take the liberty of a free subject to vituperate certain of his edicts—and that only in private.

I shall be very glad to see you, or your remaining canto; if both together, so much the better.

I am interrupted——

## LETTER VII.

Oct. 15th, 1815.

DEAR HUNT,

I send you a thing whose greatest value is its present rarity;\* the present copy contains some manuscript corrections previous to an Edition which was printed, but not published, and, in short, all that is in the suppressed Edition, the fifth, except twenty lines in addition, for which there was not room in the copy before me. There are in it *many* opinions I have altered, and some which I retain; upon the whole, I wish that it had never been written; though my sending you this copy (the only one in my possession, unless one of Lady B's. be excepted) may seem at variance with this statement:—but my reason for this is very different: it is, however, the only gift I have made of the kind this many a day.†

P. S. You probably know that it is not in print for sale, nor ever will be (if I can help it) again.

## LETTER VIII.

Oct. 22, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,

You have excelled yourself—if not all your cotemporaries, in the Canto‡ which I have just finished. I think it above the former books; but that is as it should be; it rises with the subject, the conception appears to me perfect, and the execution perhaps as nearly so as verse will admit. There is more originality than I recollect to have seen elsewhere within the same compass, and frequent and great happiness of expression. In short,

\* A copy of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

† The absence of the signature to this letter, as to others, is owing to my having given it away. Letters have been given away also, or I should have had more for the reader's amusement.

‡ One of the Cantos of the story of "Rimini;" I believe, the third.



I must turn to the faults, or what appear such to me: these are not many, nor such as may not be easily altered, being almost all *verbal*;—and of the same kind as I pretended to point out in the former cantos, viz. occasional quaintness and obscurity, and a kind of harsh and yet colloquial compounding of epithets, as if to avoid saying common things in the common way; “*difficile est propriè communia dicere*,” seems at times to have met with in you a literal translator. I have made a few, and but a few, pencil marks on the MS. which you can follow or not, as you please.

The poem, as a whole, will give you a very high station; but where is the conclusion? Don't let it cool in the composition! You can always delay as long as you like revising, though I am not sure, in the very face of Horace, that the “*nonum*,” &c. is attended with advantage, unless we read “months” for “years.” I am glad the book sent\* reached you. I forgot to tell you the story of its suppression, which shan't be longer than I can make it. My motive for writing that poem was, I fear, not so fair as you are willing to believe it; I was angry, and determined to be witty, and, fighting in a crowd, dealt about my blows against all alike, without distinction or discernment. When I came home from the East, among other new acquaintances and friends, politics and the state of the Nottingham rioters,—(of which county I am a landholder, and Lord Holland, Recorder of the town,) led me by the good offices of Mr. Rogers into the society of Lord Holland, who with Lady Holland was particularly kind to me: about March, 1812, this introduction took place, when I made my first speech on the Frame Bill, in the same debate in which Lord Holland spoke. Soon after this, I was correcting the fifth edition of “*E. B.*” for the press, when Rogers represented to me that he knew Lord and Lady Holland would not be sorry if I suppressed any farther publication of that poem; and I immediately acquiesced, and with great pleasure, for I had attacked them upon a fancied and false provocation, with many others; and neither was, nor am sorry, to have done what I could to sti-

\* “*English Bards*,” &c.

fle that ferocious rhapsody. This was subsequent to my acquaintance with Lord Holland, and was neither expressed nor understood, as a *condition* of that acquaintance. Rogers told me he thought I ought to suppress it; I thought so too, and did it as far as I could, and that's all. I sent you my copy, because I consider your having it much the same as having it myself. Lady Byron has one; I desire not to have any other; and sent it only as a curiosity and a memento.

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## LETTER IX.

13, Terrace, Piccadilly, Sept.—Oct. \* 30th, 1815.

MY DEAR HUNT,

Many thanks for your books, of which you already know my opinion. Their external splendour should not disturb you as inappropriate—they have still more within than without.

I take leave to differ from you on Wordsworth, as freely as I once agreed with you; at that time I gave him credit for a promise, which is unfulfilled. I still think his capacity warrants all you say of *it* only—but that his performances since “*Lyrical Ballads*,” are miserably inadequate to the ability which lurks within him: there is undoubtedly much natural talent spilt over “*The Excursion*,” but it is rain upon rocks—where it stands and stagnates, or rain upon sands—where it falls without fertilizing. Who can understand him? Let those who do, make him intelligible. Jacob Behmen, Swedenborg and Joanna Southcote, are mere types of this arch-apostle of mystery and mysticism? but I have done—no I have not done, for I have too petty, and perhaps unworthy objections in small matters to make to him, which, with his pretensions to accurate observation, and fury against Pope’s false translation of the “*Moonlight scene in Homer*,” I wonder he should have fallen into:—these be they:—He says of Greece in the body of his book—that it is a land of

\* Sic in MS.

“ *Rivers, fertile plains, and sounding shores,  
Under a cope of variegated sky.*”

The rivers are dry half the year, the plains are barren, and the shores *still* and *tideless* as the Mediterranean can make them; the sky is any thing but variegated, being for months and months but “darkly, deeply, beautifully blue.”—The next is in his notes, where he talks of our “Monuments crowded together in the busy, &c. of a large town,” as compared with the “still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery in some *remote* place.” This is pure stuff: for *one* monument in our church-yards there are *ten* in the Turkish, and so crowded, that you cannot walk between them; they are always close to the walls of the towns, that is, merely divided by a path or road; and as to “remote places,” men never take the trouble, in a barbarous country, to carry their dead very far; they must have lived near to where they are buried. There are no cemeteries in “remote places,” except such as have the cypress and the tombstone still left, where the olive and the habitation of the living have perished. . . . . These things I was struck with, as coming peculiarly in my own way; and in both of these he is wrong; yet I should have noticed neither, but for his attack on Pope for a like blunder, and a peevish affectation about him, of despising a popularity which he will never obtain. I write in great haste, and, I doubt, *not* much to the purpose; but you have it hot and hot, just as it comes, and so let it go.

By the way, both he and you go too far against Pope’s “So when the Moon,” &c.; it is no translation, I know; but it is not such false description as asserted. I have read it on the spot: there is a burst, and a lightness, and a glow about the night in the Troad, which makes the “planets vivid,” and the “pole glaring;” the moon is—at least the sky is clearness itself; and I know no more appropriate expression for the expansion of such a heaven—o’er the scene—the plain—the sea—the sky—Ida—the Hellespont—Simois—Scamander—and the Isles,—than that of a “flood of glory.” I am getting horribly lengthy, and must stop: to the whole of your letter I say “ditto to Mr. Burke,” as the Bristol candi-



date cried by way of electioneering harangue. You need not speak of morbid feelings and vexations to me; I have plenty; for I must blame partly the times, and chiefly myself: but let us forget them. *I* shall be very apt to do so when I see you next. Will you come to the Theatre and see our new management? You shall cut it up to your heart's content, root and branch, afterwards, if you like; but come and see it! If not, I must come and see you.

Ever yours,  
Very truly and affectionately,  
BYRON.

P. S. Not a word from Moore for these two months. Pray let me have the rest of Rimini. You have two excellent points in that Poem—originality and Italianism. I will back you as a bard against half the fellows on whom you have thrown away much good criticism and eulogy: but don't let your bookseller publish in *quarto*; it is the worst size possible for circulation. I say this on bibliopolical authority.

Again, yours ever, B.

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## LETTER X.

January, 29th, 1816.

DEAR HUNT,

I return your extract with thanks for the perusal, and hope you are by this time on the verge of publication. My pencil-marks on the margin of your former MSS. I never thought worth the trouble of decyphering, but I had no such meaning as you imagine for their being withheld from Murray, from whom I differ entirely as to the *terms* of your agreement; nor do I think you asked a piastre too much for the poem. However, I doubt not he will deal fairly by you on the whole: he is really a very good fellow, and his faults are merely the leaven of his "trade"—"the trade!" the slave-trade of many an unlucky writer.

The said Murray and I are just at present in no good

humour with each other; but he is not the worse for that: I feel sure that he will give your work as fair or a fairer chance in every way than your late publishers; and what he can't do for it, it will do for itself.

Continual laziness and occasional indisposition have been the causes of my negligence (for I deny neglect) in not writing to you immediately. These are excuses; I wish they may be more satisfactory to you than they are to me. I opened my eyes yesterday morning on your compliment of Sunday. If you knew what a hopeless and lethargic den of dulness and drawling our hospital is during a debate; and what a mass of corruption in its patients, you would wonder, not that I very seldom speak, but that I ever attempted it, feeling, as I trust I do, independently. However, when a proper spirit is manifested "without doors," I will endeavour not to be idle within. Do you think such a time is coming? Methinks there are gleams of it. My forefathers were of the other side of the question in Charles's days, and the fruit of it was a title and the loss of an enormous property.

If the old struggle comes on, I may lose the one and shall never regain the other, but no matter; there are things, even in this world, better than either.

Very, truly,  
Ever yours,

B.

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## LETTER XI.

Feb. 26th, 1816.

DEAR HUNT,

Your letter would have been answered before, had I not thought it probable that, as you were in town for a day or so, I should have seen you. I don't mean this as a hint at reproach for not calling, but merely that of course I should have been very glad if you had called in your way home or abroad, as I always would have been, and always shall be. With regard to the circumstance to which you allude, there is no reason why you should not speak openly to me on a subject already

sufficiently rise in the mouths and minds of what is called "the World."—Of the "fifty reports," it follows that forty-nine must have more or less error and exaggeration; but I am sorry to say, that on the main and essential point of an intended, and, it may be, an inevitable separation, I can contradict none. At present I shall say no more—but this is not from want of confidence; in the meantime, I shall merely request a suspension of opinion. Your prefatory letter to "Rimini," I accepted as it was meant—as a public compliment and a private kindness. I am only sorry that it may perhaps operate against you as an inducement, and, with some, a pretext, for attack on the part of the political and personal enemies of both:—not that this can be of much consequence, for in the end the work must be judged by its merits, and in that respect you are well armed. Murray tells me it is going on well, and, you may depend upon it, there is a substratum of poetry which is a foundation for solid and durable fame. The objections (*if* there be objections, for this is a *presumption*, and not an *assumption*,) will be merely as to the mechanical part, and such, as I stated before, the usual consequences of either novelty or revival. I desired Murray to forward to you a pamphlet with two things of mine in it, the most part of both of them, and of one in particular, *written* before *others* of my composing, which have preceded them in *publication*; they are neither of them of much pretension, nor intended for it. You will perhaps wonder at my dwelling so much and so frequently on former subjects and scenes; but the fact is, that I found them fading fast from my memory; and I was, at the same time, so partial to their *place*, (and events connected with it,) that I have stamped them, while I could, in such colours as I could trust to now, but might have confused and misapplied hereafter, had I longer delayed the attempted delineation.



## LETTER XII.

March 14, 1816.

DEAR HUNT,

I send you six orchestra tickets for Drury Lane, countersigned by me, which makes the admission *free*—which I explain, that the doorkeeper may not impose upon you; they are for the best place in the house, but can only be used one at a time. I have left the dates unfilled, and you can take your own nights, which I should suppose would be Kean's: the seat is in the orchestra. I have inserted the name of Mr. H——, a friend of yours, in case you like to transfer to him—do not forget to fill up the dates for such days as you choose to select.

Yours, ever truly,

BYRON.

## FRAGMENTS OF LETTERS,

*The rest of which has been Mutilated or lost.*

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### FRAGMENT I.

———good of “Rimini.” —Sir Henry Englefield, a mighty man in the blue circles, and a very clever man any where, sent to Murray, in terms of the highest eulogy; and with regard to the common reader, my *sister* and *cousin* (who are now all my family, and the last since gone away to be married) were in fixed perusal and delight with it, and they are “not critical,” but fair, natural, unaffected, and understanding persons.

Frere, and all the arch-literati, I hear, are also unanimous in a high opinion of the poem. “I hear this by the way—but I will send.”

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### FRAGMENT II.

With regard to the E. B. I have no concealments, nor desire to have any, from you or yours: the suppression occurred (I am as sure as I can be of any thing) in the manner stated: I have never regretted that, but very often the composition—that is the *humeur* of a great deal in it. As to the quotation you allude to, I have no right, nor indeed desire, to prevent it; but, on the contrary, in common with all other writers, I do and ought to take it as a compliment.

The paper on the Methodists was sure to raise the bristles of the godly. I *redde* it, and agree with the

writer on one point, in which you and he perhaps differ; that an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of "an uneasy mind in an uneasy body;" disease or deformity have been the attendants of many of our best. Collins mad—Chatterton, *I* think, mad—Cowper mad—Pope crooked—Milton blind—Grey—(I have heard that the last was afflicted by an incurable and very grievous distemper, though not generally known) and others——. I have somewhere redde, however, that poets *rarely* go mad. I suppose the writer means that their insanity effervesces and evaporates in verse—may be so.

I have not had time nor paper to attack your *system*, which ought to be done, were it only because it is a *system*. So, by and by, have at you.

Yours, ever,  
BYRON.



## CONTEMPORARY MEMOIRS.

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### MR. MOORE.

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I THOUGHT Thomas Moore, when I first knew him, as delightful a person as one could imagine. He could not help being an interesting one; and his sort of talent has this advantage in it, that being of a description intelligible to all, the possessor is equally sure of present and future fame. I never received a visit from him, but I felt as if I had been talking with Prior or Sir Charles Sedley. His acquaintance with Lord Byron began by talking of a duel. With me it commenced in as gallant a way, though of a different sort. I had cut up an opera of his, (the Blue Stocking,) as unworthy of so great a wit. He came to see me, saying I was very much in the right; and an intercourse took place, which I might have enjoyed to this day, had he valued his real fame as much as I did. I mean to assume nothing in saying this, either as a dispenser of reputation, or as a man of undisputed reputation myself. I live too much out of the world, and differ too plainly with what is in it, to pretend to be either one or the other. But Mr. Moore, in his serious as well as gayer verses, talked a great deal of independence and openness, and the contempt of common-places; and on this account he owed it to his admirers not to disappoint them. He was bound to them the more es-

pecially, when they put hearty faith in him, and when they thought they paid him a compliment in being independent themselves. The reader has seen to what I allude. At the time I am speaking of, my acquaintance, perhaps, was of some little service to Mr. Moore; at least, he thought so. I am sure I never valued myself on any service which a very hearty admiration of his wit and independence could render him. It was involuntary on my part; I could not have helped it; and at all times, the advantage of personal intercourse would have been on my side.

Mr. Moore was lively, polite, bustling, full of amenities and acquiescences, into which he contrived to throw a sort of roughening of cordiality, like the crust of old port. It seemed a happiness to him to say "Yes." There was just enough of the Irishman in him to flavour his speech and manner. He was a little particular, perhaps, in his orthöepy, but not more so than became a poet; and he appeared to me the last man in the world to cut his country, even for the sake of high life. As to his person, all the world knows that he is as little of stature, as he is great in wit. It is said, that an illustrious personage, in a fit of playfulness, once threatened to put him into the wine-cooler; a proposition, which Mr. Moore took to be more royal than polite. A Spanish gentleman, whom I met on the Continent, and who knew him well, said, in his energetic English, which he spoke none the worse for a wrong vowel or so: "Now, there's *Mooerr*, Thomas *Mooerr*; I look upon *Mooerr* as an active little *men*." This is true. He reminds us of those active little great men who abound so remarkably in Clarendon's history. Like them, he would have made an excellent practical partisan, and it would have done him good. Horseback, and a little Irish fighting, would have seen fair play with his good living, and kept his look as juvenile as his spirit. His forehead is bony and full of character, with "bumps" of wit, large and radiant, enough to transport a phrenologist. His eyes are as dark and fine, as you would wish to see under a set of vine-leaves; his mouth generous and good-humoured, with dimples; his nose sensual, prominent, and at the same time the reverse of aquiline. There is

a very peculiar character in it, as if it were looking forward, and scenting a feast or an orchard. The face, upon the whole, is Irish, not unruffled with care and passion; but festivity is the predominant expression. When Mr. Moore was a child, he is said to have been eminently handsome, a cupid for a picture; and notwithstanding the tricks which both joy and sorrow have played with his face, you can fancy as much. It was a recollection, perhaps to this effect, that induced his friend, Mr. Atkinson, to say, one afternoon, in defending him from the charge of libertinism, "Sir, they may talk of Moore as they please; but I tell you what; I always consider him," (and this argument he thought conclusive,) "I always consider my friend, Thomas Moore, as an infant sporting on the bosom of Venus." There was no contesting this; and in truth, the hearers were very little disposed to contest it, Mr. Atkinson having hit upon a defence which was more logical in spirit than chronological in the image. When conscience comes, a man's impulses must take thought; but till then, poetry is only the eloquent and irresistible developement of the individual's nature; and Mr. Moore's wildest verses were a great deal more innocent than could enter into the imaginations of the old libertines who thought they had a right to use them. I must not, in this portrait, leave out his music. He plays and sings with great taste on the piano-forte, and is known as a graceful composer. His voice, which is a little hoarse in speaking, (at least, I used to think so,) softens into a breath, like that of the flute when singing. In speaking, he is emphatic in rolling the letter *r*, perhaps out of a despair of being able to get rid of the national peculiarity. The structure of his versification, when I knew him, was more artificial than it has been since; and in his serious compositions suited him better. He has hardly faith enough in what he does, to give way to his impulses, except when they are lively; and artificial thoughts demand a similar embodiment. But he contemplated the fine, easy-playing, muscular style of Dryden, with a sort of perilous pleasure. I remember his quoting with delight a couplet of Dryden's, which came with a particular grace out of his mouth:



Let honour and preferment go for gold:  
But glorious beauty is'nt to be sold.

Beside the pleasure I took in Mr. Moore's society as a man of wit, I had a great esteem for him as a man of candour and independence. His letters were full of all that was pleasant in him. As I was a critic at that time, and in the habit of giving my opinion of his works in the *Examiner*, he would write me his *opinion* of the *opinion*, with a mixture of good-humour, admission, and deprecation, so truly delightful, and a sincerity of criticism on my own writings so extraordinary for so courteous a man, though with abundance of balm and eulogy, that never any subtlety of compliment could surpass it; and with all my self-confidence, I never ceased to think that the honour was on my side, and that I could only deserve such candour of intercourse by being as ingenuous as himself. This admiring regard for him he completed by his behaviour to an old patron of his, who, not thinking it polite to retain him openly by his side, proposed to facilitate his acceptance of a place under the Tories; an accommodation which Mr. Moore rejected as an indignity. If any body at that time had told me, that our new and cordial Anacreon, who counted a lofty spirit among his luxuries, could do a disingenuous thing, or sacrifice a cause or a free sentiment on the fat altars of aristocracy—a sweet-smelling savour unto a lord,—I should have answered, that all that might be in the common course of the prose of this life; but that nobody knew what superiority there was to conventional deductions in the very weaknesses of a poet.\*

I remember our astonishment in Italy (Lord Byron's included) at the flaming panegyric passed by Mr. Moore upon England, and all things English, at a dinner in Paris. It was his farewell dinner, if I recollect, when leaving Paris for London. Either the English panegyric or the Irish Melodies were certainly much in the wrong; nor is it easy to decide what Captain Rock would have said to it. But the invective against Rousseau and poor

\* For the circumstance which more immediately occasioned these remarks, see p. 58.

Madame de Warens, in Mr. Moore's Rhymes on the Road, was still more startling. Madame de Warens is not a person to be approved of in all respects, perhaps in very few. She had a kind heart, but a dangerous, ill-regulated will, and might at least have abstained from loving the sour-faced gardener, and sacrificing her natural love of truth to degrading secrecies. But nobody thinks otherwise of her than she was; and Mr. Moore's denouncement was, to say the least of it, superfluous. These things may be safely left to the heart of the community. The evil mixed with them may even suggest a better good, if discussed handsomely and sincerely. Madame de Warens was a means of setting one of the most extraordinary minds that have appeared in the world, upon speculations not the less interesting to humanity, because coteries, not so good as herself, choose to cant about them. Mr. Granger, the biographical painter of portraits, who was a clergyman, and did not think it necessary to show a "zeal beyond knowledge," would have been charitable enough to call her "open-hearted," which is an epithet he does not scruple to give even to the meretricious Duchess of Cleveland. Mr. Moore, on the other hand, instead of taking her along with him as he ought to do, and trying how kindly he can unite his own moral improvement with that of "exquisite mothers" in general, thinks fit to shake his Anacreon laurels at her, and call her a naughty woman. I would have done, if I were he, with this two-o'-clock-in-the-morning penitence, with maudlin tears in its eyes; and set myself to the task of reformation in a more masculine and social style. It is not handsome of him; it is not grateful; it is not gallant. Human beings are all worth being mentioned with common humanity; and we make poor amends for offences we may have committed ourselves, by reproaching those who have sinned with us. The great thing in this world, is to learn what to do, and how to carry humanity forward; not to reproach any one; no, not even ourselves. We should reproach ourselves only for petty and useless feelings, and the want of a real sympathy. If Mr. Moore, as he once told me he did, thinks it useless to attempt improvement in this world, he is at least not very reasonable in thinking it

necessary to repeat maudlin common-places, for the sake of their eternal reproduction; for they do nothing else. The world will continue to laugh with his gaieties, and think nothing of his gravities, let him give as many premiums for pleasure and penitence, as he may.

A word respecting the suppression of Lord Byron's autobiography. The public have seen a letter of Mr. Moore's stating how it was that the manuscript of his friend's Life came to be destroyed, and how his Lordship's family would have reimbursed him for the loss of the profits; an offer which, from feelings and considerations "unnecessary" then "to explain," he "respectfully but peremptorily declined." The meaning of this is, that Lord Byron presented Mr. Moore with the Life for the purpose of turning it into money; that Mr. Moore did so, and got two thousand guineas for it, (a poor sum by the by, if it was all he was to have :) and that although he had no objection to receive money in this way, he had in any other. I do not insinuate that he might as well have accepted the money then offered; but Mr. Moore, on this and other occasions, has been willing to give the commercial British public to understand, that he has a horror of pecuniary obligations, though it seems he has no objection to pecuniary's worth. This, I confess, is a splitting of hairs, which I do not understand. If a friend is worth being obliged to, I do not see how a man is less obliged, or has less reason to be so, by accepting his manuscripts than his money. It is an escape, not from the thing, but the name; and if I were the obliger, I confess I should draw a different conclusion from what Lord Byron may have done, respecting the real regard or spirit of the man, who thought so ingeniously of my Life, and so awfully of my guineas. That the tenure of the noble Bard's respect in this matter was indeed very precarious, is evident from the *bill* he brought in against Mr. Dallas; a leaf from the ledger of his Lordship's memory, which, I think, must have startled Mr. Moore.

Mr. Dallas having made a preposterous statement of the value of his zeal and advice, in encouraging Lord Byron to be a poet, and observed that it far outweighed, in his opinion, the six or seven hundred pounds obtained by the copyright of "*Childe Harold*," which the noble



Bard had given him, his Lordship makes a per contra statement, as creditor, in the following

“MEMORANDUM.

Two hundred pounds before I was twenty years old.

*Copyright of Childe Harold, 600l.*

*Copyright of Corsair, 500l.*

And 50l. for his nephew on entering the army; *in all* 1350l. and not 6 or 700l. as the worthy accountant reckons.”

Here the noble Lord is clearly of opinion, that money and money's worth are one and the same thing. He was therefore prepared, could occasion have possibly arisen, to bring in a similar account to Mr. Moore, for the sum of 2000l. The truth is, Mr. Moore's notion in this matter is a common-place; and I used to think him higher above common-places than he is. I should look upon myself as more tied, and rendered more dependent, by living as he does among the great, and flattering the mistakes of the vulgar, than by accepting thousands from individuals whom I loved. When I came to know Lord Byron as I did, I could no more have accepted his manuscripts than his money, unless I could prove to myself that I had a right to them in the way of business. Till then, I would as soon have taken the one as the other, if I took any. The reader shall see what I have done in that way, and I am not ashamed of it, though I confess I would willingly have to make the acknowledgment to a different state of society. One does not like to be thought ill of by any body; but if I am to choose, I would rather have the good construction of half a dozen individuals really generous, than the good word of all the multitudes, who are agreed only to flatter, to feed on, and to fight shy of one another.

As it is not pleasant to leave off speaking of such a man with an ill taste in one's mouth, (the champagne indeed in the thought of him hardly allows it to be possible,) I will conclude this notice with a memorandum of him fourteen years ago. It is one of my prison recollections. I remember when I was showing him and Lord Byron the prison-garden, a smart shower came on,

which induced Moore to button up his coat, and push on for the interior. He returned instantly, blushing up to the eyes. He had forgotten the lameness of his noble friend. "How much better you behaved," said he to me afterwards, "in not hastening to get out of the rain! I quite forgot, at the moment, whom I was walking with." I told him, that the virtue was involuntary on my part, having been occupied in conversation with his Lordship, which he was not; and that to forget a man's lameness involved a compliment in it, which the sufferer could not dislike." "True," says he; "but the devil of it was, that I was forced to remember it, by his not coming up. I could not in decency go on; and to return was very awkward." This anxiety appeared to me very amiable.

**MR. SHELLEY,**  
**WITH A CRITICISM ON HIS GENIUS,**

AND

MR. TRELAWNEY'S NARRATIVE OF HIS LOSS AT SEA.

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MR. SHELLEY, when he died, was in his thirtieth year. His figure was tall and slight, and his constitution consumptive. He was subject to violent spasmodic pains, which would sometimes force him to lie on the ground till they were over; but he had always a kind word to give to those about him, when his pangs allowed him to speak. In this organization, as well as in some other respects, he resembled the German poet, Schiller. Though well-turned, his shoulders were bent a little, owing to premature thought and trouble. The same causes had touched his hair with grey: and though his habits of temperance and exercise gave him a remarkable degree of strength, it is not supposed that he could have lived many years. He used to say, that he had lived three times as long as the calender gave out; which he would prove, between jest and earnest, by some remarks on Time,

“That would have puzzled that stout Stagyrite.”

Like the Stagyrite's, his voice was high and weak. His eyes were large and animated, with a dash of wildness in them; his face small, but well shaped, particularly the mouth and chin, the turn of which was very sensitive and graceful. His complexion was naturally fair and delicate, with a colour in the cheeks. He had brown hair,



which, though tinged with grey, surmounted his face well, being in considerable quantity, and tending to a curl. His side-face upon the whole was deficient in strength, and his features would not have told well in a bust; but when fronting and looking at you attentively, his aspect had a certain seraphical character that would have suited a portrait of John the Baptist, or the angel whom Milton describes as holding a reed "tipt with fire." Nor would the most religious mind, had it known him, have objected to the comparison; for, with all his scepticism, Mr. Shelley's disposition may be truly said to have been any thing but irreligious. A person of much eminence for piety in our times has well observed, that the greatest want of religious feeling is not to be found among the greatest infidels, but among those who never think of religion but as a matter of course. The leading feature of Mr. Shelley's character, may be said to have been a natural piety. He was pious towards nature, towards his friends, towards the whole human race, towards the meanest insect of the forest. He did himself an injustice with the public, in using the popular name of the Supreme Being inconsiderately. He identified it solely with the most vulgar and tyrannical notions of a God made after the worst human fashion; and did not sufficiently reflect, that it was often used by a juster devotion to express a sense of the great Mover of the universe. An impatience in contradicting worldly and pernicious notions of a supernatural power, led his own aspirations to be misconstrued; for though, in the severity of his dialectics, and particularly in moments of despondency, he sometimes appeared to be hopeless of what he most desired,—and though he justly thought, that a Divine Being would prefer the increase of benevolence and good before any praise, or even recognition of himself, (a reflection worth thinking of by the intolerant,) yet there was in reality no belief to which he clung with more fondness than that of some great pervading "Spirit of Intellectual-Beauty;" as may be seen in his aspirations on that subject. He said to me in the cathedral at Pisa, while the organ was playing, "What a divine religion might be found out, if charity were really made the principle of it, instead of faith!"

Music affected him deeply. He had also a delicate perception of the beauties of sculpture. It is not one of the least evidences of his conscientious turn of mind, that with the inclination, and the power, to surround himself in Italy with all the graces of life, he made no sort of attempt that way; finding other use for his money, and not always satisfied with himself for indulging even in the luxury of a boat. When he bought elegancies of any kind, it was to give away. Boating was his great amusement. He loved the mixture of action and repose which he found in it; and delighted to fancy himself gliding away to the Utopian isles, and bowers of enchantment. But he would give up any pleasure to do a deed of kindness. "His life," says Mrs. Shelley, "was spent in the contemplation of nature in arduous study, or in acts of kindness and affection. He was an elegant scholar, and a profound metaphysician. Without possessing much scientific knowledge, he was unrivalled in the justness and extent of his observations on natural objects: he knew every plant by its name, and was familiar with the history and habits of every production of the earth: he could interpret, without a fault, each appearance in the sky; and the varied phenomena of heaven and earth filled him with deep emotion. He made his study and reading-room of the shadowed copse, the stream, the lake, and the waterfall."—*Preface* to his Posthumous Poems, p. 14. "The comparative solitude," observes the same lady, "in which Mr. Shelley lived, was the occasion that he was personally known to few; and his fearless enthusiasm in the cause which he considered the most sacred upon earth, the improvement of the moral and physical state of mankind, was the chief reason why he, like other illustrious reformers, was pursued by hatred and calumny. No man was ever more devoted than he to the endeavour of making those around him happy; no man ever possessed friends more unfeignedly attached to him. Before the critics contradict me, let them appeal to any one who had ever known him. To see him was to love him."—*Ibid.* This is a high character, and I, for one, know it was deserved. I should be glad to know, how many wives of Mr. Shelley's calumniators could say as

much of their husbands; or how many of the critics would believe them, if they did.

Mr. Shelley's comfort was a sacrifice to the perpetual contradiction between the professions of society and their practice; between "the shows of things and the desires of the mind." Temperament and early circumstances conspired to make him a reformer, at a time of life when few begin to think for themselves; and it was his misfortune, as far as immediate reputation was concerned, that he was thrown upon society with a precipitancy and vehemence, which rather startled them with fear for themselves, than allowed them to become sensible of the love and zeal that impelled him. He was like a spirit that had darted out of its orb, and found itself in another planet. I used to tell him that he had come from the planet Mercury. When I heard of the catastrophe that overtook him, it seemed as if this spirit, not sufficiently constituted like the rest of the world, to obtain their sympathy, yet gifted with a double portion of love for all living things, had been found dead in a solitary corner of the earth, its wings stiffened, its warm heart cold; the relics of a misunderstood nature, slain by the ungenial elements.

That the utility, however, of so much benevolence was not lost to the world, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to its occasional mode of showing itself, will be evinced, I hope, by the following pages.

Mr. Shelley was the eldest son of Sir Timothy Shelley, Bart. of Castle-Goring, in Sussex; and was born at Field-Place, in that county, the 4th of August, 1792.\*

\* Gibbon has a note in his *Decline and Fall*, in which, with a greater degree of romance than might have been expected of him, even with all his self-love as a man of letters, he "exhorts" the noble family of the Spensers to consider the Fairy Queen as the "brightest jewel in their coronet." The Shelleys are of old standing, and have branched out into three several baronetcies, one of which has become the representative of the kindred of Sir Philip Sidney. Mr. Shelley had a respect for that distinction, carelessly as he contemplated the other family honours. He would have allowed no claim for superiority to be put in there. But if I had a right to speak like Gibbon, and if affection might be allowed to anticipate the voice of posterity, I would "exhort" in like manner the race of the Shelleys to pierce through the din of existing prejudices, and consider no sound so fair as the name of their aspiring kinsman.



It is difficult, under any circumstances, to speak with proper delicacy of the living connexions of the dead; but it is no violation of decorum to observe (what, indeed, the reader knows already, if he knows any thing of parliament,) that the family connexions of Mr. Shelley belonged to a small party in the House of Commons, itself belonging to another party. They were Whig Aristocrats; a distinction that, within a late period, has been handsomely merged by some of the bearers of it into the splendour of a more prevailing universality. To a man of genius, endowed with a metaphysical acuteness to discern truth and falsehood, and a strong sensibility to give way to his sense of it, such an origin, however respectable in the ordinary point of view, was not the very luckiest that could have happened, for the purpose of keeping him within ordinary bounds. With what feelings is Truth to open its eyes upon this world among the most respectable of our mere party gentry? Among licensed contradictions of all sorts? among the Christian doctrines and the worldly practices? Among fox-hunters and their chaplains? among beneficed loungers, noli-episcoparian bishops, rakish old gentlemen, and more startling young ones, who are old in the folly of *knowingness*? In short, among all those professed demands of what is right and noble, mixed with real inculcations of what is wrong and full of hypocrisy, which have been so admirably exposed by Mr. Bentham, and which he has fortunately helped some of our best living statesmen to leave out of the catalogue of their ambitions.

Mr. Shelley began to think at a very early age, and to think too of these anomalies. He saw, that at every step in life some compromise was expected between a truth which he was told not to violate, and a colouring and double-meaning of it, which forced him upon the violation.

Doubtless there are numbers of young men who discern nothing of all this; and who, comparatively speaking, become respectable tellers of truth in spite of it. These are the honourable part of the orthodox; good-natured fathers and husbands, conscientious clergymen, respectable men in various walks of life, who, thinking they abide by the ideas that have been set before them, really

have very few ideas of any thing, and are only remarkable for affording specimens of every sort of commonplace comfortable or unhappy. On the other hand, numbers of young men get a sense of this confusion of principles, if not with a direct and logical consciousness, yet with an instinct for turning it to account. Even some of these, by dint of a genial nature, and upon the same principle on which a heathen priest would eschew the vices of his mythology, turn out decent members of society. But how many others are spoilt for ever! How many victims to this confusion of truth and falsehood, apparently flourishing, but really callous or unhappy, are to be found in all quarters of the community; men who profess opinions which contradict their whole lives; takers of oaths, which they dispense with the very thought of; subscribers to articles which they doubt, or even despise; triflers with their hourly word for gain; expedient statesmen; ready hirelings of power; sneering disbelievers in good; teachers to their own children of what has spoilt themselves, and has rendered their existence a dull and selfish mockery.

Whenever a character like Mr. Shelley's appears in society, it must be considered with reference to these systems. Others may consent to be spoilt by them, and to see their fellow-creatures spoilt. He was a looker-on of a different nature.

With this jumble, then, of truth and falsehood in his head, and a genius born to detect it, though perhaps never quite able to rid itself of the injury, (for if ever he deviated into an error unworthy of him, it was in occasionally condescending, though for the kindest purposes, to use a little double-dealing,) Mr. Shelley was sent to Eton, and afterwards to the University of Oxford. At Eton, a Quarterly Reviewer recollects him setting trees on fire with a burning-glass; a proceeding which the critic sets down to his natural taste for destruction. A more impartial and not less philosophic observer might have attributed it to the natural curiosity of genius. Perhaps, if the Reviewer recollected Mr. Shelley, Mr. Shelley no less recollected him as one of the school-tyrants against whom he rose up, in opposition to the system of fagging. Against this custom he formed a conspiracy; and for a

time made it pause, at least as far as his own person was concerned. Mr. Shelley's feelings at this period of his life are touchingly and powerfully described in the dedication of the *Revolt of Islam*.

“ Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear Friend, when first  
 The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.  
 I do remember well the hour which burst  
 My spirit's sleep : a fresh May-day it was,  
 When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,  
 And wept, I knew not why ; until there rose  
 From the near school-room, voices, that, alas !  
 Were but one echo from a world of woes—  
 The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

“ And then I clasped my hands, and look'd around—  
 But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,  
 Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground.—  
 So without shame I spake : ‘ I will be wise,  
 And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies  
 Such power ; for I grow weary to behold  
 The selfish and the strong still tyrannise  
 Without reproach or check.’ I then controlled  
 My tears ; my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold.

“ And from that hour did I, with earnest thought,  
 Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore ;  
 Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught  
 I cared to learn ; but from that secret store  
 Wrought linked armour for my soul, before  
 It might walk forth to war among mankind.”

Mr. Shelley retained all his kindness and energy, but corrected, as he here aspires to do, the irritability of his temper. No man by the account of all who lived with him, ever turned it into greater sweetness. The Reviewer, by the usual process of tyranny, became a slave.

Mr. Shelley, I believe, was taken from Eton before the regular period for leaving school. His unconventional spirit, penetrating, sincere, and demanding the reason and justice of things, was found to be inconvenient. At Oxford it was worse. Logic was there put into his hands ; and he used it in the most uncompromising manner. The more important the proposition, the more he thought himself bound to investigate it : the greater the demand upon his assent, the less upon their own principle of reasoning, he thought himself bound to grant it. The result was expulsion.



Conceive a young man of Mr. Shelley's character, with no better experience of the kindness and sincerity of those whom he had perplexed, thrown forth into society, to form his own judgments, and pursue his own career. It was "*Emilius out in the World*," but formed by his own tutorship. There is a Novel, under that title, written by the German, La Fontaine, which has often reminded me of him. The hero of another, by the same author, called the "*Reprobate*," still more resembles him. His way of proceeding was entirely after the fashion of those guileless, but vehement hearts, which not being well replied to by their teachers, and finding them hostile to inquiry, add to a natural love of truth all the passionate ardour of a generous and devoted protection of it. Mr. Shelley had met with Mr. Godwin's "Political Justice;" and he seemed to breathe, for the first time, in an open and bright atmosphere. He resolved to square all his actions by what he conceived to be the strictest justice, without any consideration for the opinions of those, whose little exercise of that virtue towards himself, ill-fitted them, he thought, for better teachers, and as ill warranted him in deferring to the opinions of the world whom they guided. That he did some extraordinary things in consequence, is admitted: that he did many noble ones, and all with sincerity, is well known to his friends, and will be admitted by all sincere persons. Let those who are so fond of exposing their own natures, by attributing every departure from ordinary conduct to bad motives, ask themselves what conduct could be more extraordinary in their eyes, and at the same time less attributable to a bad motive, than the rejection of an estate for the love of a principle. Yet Mr. Shelley rejected one. He had only to become a yea and nay man in the house of Commons, to be one of the richest men in Sussex. He declined it, and lived upon a comparative pittance. Even the fortune that he would ultimately have inherited, as secured to his person, was petty in the comparison.

We will relate another anecdote, which the conventional will not find it so difficult to quarrel with. It trenches upon that extraordinary privilege to indulge one sex at the expense of the other, which they guard with so jealous a care, and so many hypocritical faces. The

question, we allow, is weighty. We are far from saying it is here settled: but very far are they themselves from having settled it; as their own writings and writings, their own statistics, morals, romances, tears, and even jokes will testify. The case, I understood, was this; for I am bound to declare that I forget who told it me; but it is admirably in character, and not likely to be invented. Mr. Shelley was present at a ball, where he was a person of some importance. Numerous village ladies were there, old and young; and none of the passions were absent, that are accustomed to glance in the eyes, and gossip in the tongues, of similar gatherings together of talk and dress. In the front were seated the rank and fashion of the place. The virtues diminished as the seats went backward; and at the back of all, unspoken to, but not unheeded, sat blushing a damsel who had been seduced. We do not inquire by whom; probably by some well-dressed gentleman in the room, who thought himself entitled nevertheless to the conversation of the most flourishing ladies present, and who naturally thought so because he had it. That sort of thing happens every day. It was expected, that the young squire would take out one of these ladies to dance. What is the consternation, when they see him making his way to the back benches, and handing forth, with an air of consolation and tenderness, the object of all the virtuous scorn of the room! the person whom that other gentleman, wrong as he had been towards her, and "wicked" as the ladies might have allowed him to be towards the fair sex in general, would have shrunk from touching!—Mr. Shelley, it was found, was equally unfit for school-tyrannies, for universities, and for the chaste orthodoxy of squires' tables. So he went up to town.

The philosophic observer will confess, that our young author's experience in education, politics, and gentlemanly morality, were not of a nature to divert him from his notions of justice, however calculated to bring him into trouble. Had he now behaved himself pardonably in the eyes of the orthodox, he would have gone to London with the resolution of sowing his wild oats, and becoming a decent member of society; that is to say, he would have seduced a few maid-servants, or at least

haunted the lobbies; and then bestowed the remnant of his constitution upon some young lady of his own rank in life, and settled into a proper church-and-king man, perhaps a member of the Suppression of Vice. This is the proper routine, and gives one a right to be didactic. Alas! Mr. Shelley did not do so; and bitterly had he to repent, not that he did not do it, but that he married while yet a stripling, and that the wife whom he took was not of a nature to appreciate his understanding, or perhaps to come from contact with it, uninjured in what she had of her own. They separated by mutual consent, after the birth of two children. To this measure his enemies would hardly have demurred; especially as the marriage was disapproved by Mr. Shelley's family, and the lady of inferior rank. It might have been regarded even as something like making amends. But to one thing they would strongly have objected. He proceeded, in the spirit of Milton's doctrines, to pay his court to another lady. We wish we could pursue the story in the same tone: but now came the greatest pang of Mr. Shelley's life. He was residing at Bath, when news came to him that his wife had destroyed herself. It was a heavy blow to him; and he never forgot it. Persons who riot in a debauchery of scandal, delighting in endeavouring to pull down every one to their own standard, and in repeating the grossest charges in the grossest words, have taken advantage of this passage in Mr. Shelley's life, to show their total ignorance of his nature, and to harrow up, one would think, the feelings of every person connected with him, by the most wanton promulgation of names, and the most odious falsehoods. Luckily, the habitual contempt of truth which ever accompanies the love of calumny, serves to refute it with all those whose good opinion is worth having. So leaving the scandal in those natural sinks, to which all the calumnies and falsehoods of the time hasten, we resume our remarks with the honourable and the decent. As little shall we dwell upon the conduct of one or two persons of better repute, who instead of being warned against believing every malignant rumour by the nature of their own studies, and as if they had been jealous of a zeal in behalf of mankind, which they had long been



accused of merging in speculations less noble, did not disdain to circulate the gossip of the scandalous as far as other countries, betraying a man to repulses, who was yearning with the love of his species; and confounding times, places, and circumstances, in the eagerness of their paltry credulity. Among other falsehoods it was stated, that Mr. Shelley, at that time living with his wife, had abruptly communicated to her his intention of separating; upon which the other had run to a pond at the end of the garden, and drowned herself. The fact, as we have seen, is, that they had been living apart for some time, during which the lady was accountable to no one but herself. We could relate another story of the catastrophe that took place, did we not feel sincerely for all parties concerned, and wish to avoid every species of heart-burning. Nobody could lament it more bitterly than Mr. Shelley. For a time, it tore his being to pieces; nor is there a doubt, that however deeply he was accustomed to reason on the nature and causes of evil, and on the steps necessary to be taken for opposing it, he was not without remorse for having no better exercised his judgment with regard to the degree of intellect he had allied himself with, and for having given rise to a premature independence of conduct in one unequal to the task. The lady was greatly to be pitied; so was the survivor. Let the school-tyrants, the University refusers of argument, and the orthodox sowers of their wild oats, with myriads of unhappy women behind them, rise up in judgment against him. Honester men will not be hindered from doing justice to sincerity, wherever they find it: nor be induced to blast the memory of a man of genius and benevolence, for one painful passage in his life, which he might have avoided, had he been no better than his calumniators.

On the death of this unfortunate lady, Mr. Shelley married the daughter of Mr. Godwin; and resided at Great Marlow, in Buckinghamshire, where he was a blessing to the poor. His charity, though liberal, was not weak. He inquired personally into the circumstances of the petitioners; visited the sick in their beds, (for he had gone the round of the Hospitals on purpose to be able to practise on occasion;) and kept a regular list of

industrious poor, whom he assisted with small sums to make up their accounts.\* At Marlow he wrote the *Re-*

\* "Another anecdote remains, not the least in interest." (I was speaking, in the Literary Examiner, of an adventure of Mr. Shelley's, at the time he was on a visit to me at Hampstead.) Some years ago, when a house (on the top of the Heath) "was occupied by a person whose name I forget, (and I should suppress it in common humanity, if I did not,) I was returning home to my own, which was at no great distance from it, after the Opera. As I approached my door, I heard strange and alarming shrieks, mixed with the voice of a man. The next day, it was reported by the gossips, that Mr. Shelley, no Christian, (for it was he, who was there,) had brought some 'very strange female' into the house, no better of course than she ought to be. The real Christian had puzzled them. Mr. Shelley, in coming to our house that night, had found a woman lying near the top of the hill, in fits. It was a fierce winter night, with snow upon the ground; and winter loses nothing of its fierceness at Hampstead. My friend, always the promptest as well as most pitying on these occasions, knocked at the first houses he could reach, in order to have the woman taken in. The invariable answer was, that they could not do it. He asked for an out-house to put her in, while he went for a doctor. Impossible! In vain he assured them she was no impostor. They would not dispute the point with him; but doors were closed, and windows were shut down. Had he lit upon worthy Mr. Park, the philologist, he would assuredly have come, in spite of his Calvinism. But he lived too far off. Had he lit upon you, dear B——n, or your neighbour D——e, you would either of you have jumped up from amidst your books or your bed-clothes, and have gone out with him. But the paucity of Christians is astonishing, considering the number of them. Time flies, the poor woman is in convulsions; her son, a young man, lamenting over her. At last my friend sees a carriage driving up to a house at a little distance. The knock is given; the warm door opens; servants and lights pour forth. Now, thought he, is the time. He puts on his best address, which any body might recognize for that of the highest gentleman as well as an interesting individual, and plants himself in the way of an elderly person, who is stepping out of the carriage with his family. He tells his story. They only press on the faster. 'Will you go and see her?' 'No, Sir; there's no necessity for that sort of thing, depend on it: impostors swarm every where: the thing cannot be done: Sir, your conduct is extraordinary.' 'Sir,' cried Mr. Shelley at last, assuming a very different appearance, and forcing the flourishing householder to stop out of astonishment, 'I am sorry to say that *your* conduct is *not* extraordinary: and if my own seems to amaze you, I will tell you something that may amaze you a little more, and I hope will frighten you. It is such men as you who madden the spirits and the patience of the poor and wretched: and if ever a convulsion comes in this country, (which is very probable,) recollect what I tell you;—you will have your house, that you refuse to put the miserable woman into, burnt over your head.' 'God bless me, Sir! Dear me, Sir!' exclaimed the frightened wretch, and fluttered into his mansion. The woman was then brought to our house, which was at some distance, and down a bleak path; and Mr. S. and her son were obliged to hold her, till the doctor could arrive. It appeared that

*volt of Islam.* *Queen Mab* was an earlier production, written at the age of seventeen or eighteen, when he married; and it was never published with his consent. He regretted the publication when it did take place some years afterwards, and stated as much in the newspapers, considering it a crude performance, and as not sufficiently entering into the important questions it handled. Yet upon the strength of this young and unpublished work, he was deprived of his two children.

The reader perhaps is not aware, that in this country of England where the domestic institutions are boasted of as so perfect, and are apt to be felt as so melancholy.—where freedom of opinion is so much cried up, and the tribunals take so much pains to put it down,—where writers and philosophers in short, and what may be called the unconstituted authorities, have done so much for all the world, and the constituted authorities, particularly the lawyers, have done so little for any body but themselves,\*—the reader is perhaps not aware, that in this

she had been attending this son in London, on a criminal charge made against him, the agitation of which had thrown her into the fits on her return. The doctor said that she would inevitably have perished, had she lain there a short time longer. The next day my friend sent mother and son comfortably home to Hendon, where they were well known, and whence they returned him thanks full of gratitude. Now go, ye Pharisees of all sorts, and try if ye can still open your hearts and your doors like the good Samaritan. This man was himself too brought up in a splendid mansion, and might have revelled and rioted in all worldly goods. Yet this was one of the most ordinary of his actions."

\* Always excepting Bacon, who can hardly be called a lawyer. His profession was but an accident in his life. It was in philosophy that he lived and moved and had his being; and with it he has moved the world. Experiment was that standing ground which Aristotle desired without knowing it, and on which the great lever has at last been fixed. Mechanical philosophy has not only moved; it will inevitably alter the world; and moral improvements, of all sorts, will follow. Two other lawyers' names must be added not unworthy to follow Bacon's; that of Mr. Bentham, who had no sooner entered the profession, than he got out of it; and that of Henry Brougham; who, though he remains a lawyer, presents the singular spectacle of a lawyer, equally active in his lesser calling and his greater, and consenting, perhaps, to realize the gains of the one, only that he may secure the power of pursuing the noblest of all ambitions in the other. Mr. Brougham was "meant for mankind;" and luckily he has not been prevented, by the minuter demands on his eyesight, for looking abroad and knowing it. His world is the world it ought to be,—the noble



extraordinary country, any man's children may be taken from him to-morrow, who holds a different opinion from the Lord Chancellor in faith and morals. Hume's, if he had any, might have been taken. Gibbon's might have been taken. The virtuous Condorcet, if he had been an Englishman and a father, would have stood no chance. Plato, for his Republic, would have stood as little; and Mademoiselle de Gournay might have been torn from the arms of her adopted father Montaigne, convicted beyond redemption of seeing farther than the walls of the Court of Chancery. That such things are not done often, we believe; that they may be done oftener than people suspect, we must unfortunately believe also; for they are transacted with closed doors, and the details are forbidden to transpire. Mr. Shelley was convicted of holding the unpublished opinions, which his public teachers at the University had not thought fit to reason him out of. He was also charged with not being of the received opinions with regard to the intercourse of the sexes; and his children, a girl and a boy, were taken from him. The persons who succeeded in bereaving him, did not succeed in their application to have the children put under their own management. They were transferred to the care of an old, and I dare say respectable, clergyman of the Church of England; and have long received all the helps to sincerity and perfection, which Mr. Bentham has pointed out in his remarks on that establishment. The rest depends on the natural strength of their understandings, and what reflections they may make when they compare their father's practical Christianity with the theories they will see contradicted all round them. The circumstance deeply affected Mr. Shelley: so much so, that he never afterwards dared to trust himself with mentioning his children to the friend who stood at his side throughout the business, and who was the dearest friend that he had.\* But what additional love it generated in him to-

planet, capable of being added to the number of other planets which have perhaps worked out their moral beauty;—not a mere little despairing corner of it, entitled a court of justice.

\* The boy is since dead; and Mr. Shelley's son by his second wife, the daughter of Mr. Godwin, is heir to the baronetcy. It seldom falls

wards our establishments, and their mode of reasoning, the reader may guess. The friend in question, who had first won his regard by the liberal opinions expressed in the *Examiner*, and by the unusual mode of advising him not to print a volume of juvenile poems, (an advice which still more unusually was taken,) has given, in that paper, an interesting account of Mr. Shelley's manner of life at this period. I quote from memory, but am correct in the substance. Mr. Shelley, owing to the freedom of his inquiries, as well as to the malignity of his enemies, was said to be keeping a seraglio. His friend, who partook of some of his opinions, partook of the scandal. This keeper of a seraglio, who in fact was extremely difficult to please in such matters, and who had no idea of love unconnected with sentiment, passed his days like a hermit. He rose early in the morning, walked and read before breakfast, took that meal sparingly, wrote and studied the greater part of the morning, walked and read again, dined on vegetables (for he took neither meat nor wine,) conversed with his friends (to whom his house was ever open,) again walked out, and usually finished with reading to his wife till ten o'clock, when he went to bed. This was his daily existence. His book was generally Plato, or Homer, or one of the Greek tragedians, or the Bible, in which last he took a great, though peculiar, and often admiring interest. One of his favourite parts was the book of Job. The writings attributed to Solomon he thought too Epicurean, in the modern sense of the word; and in his notions of St. Paul, he agreed with the writer of the work entitled "Not Paul but Jesus." For his Christianity, in the proper sense of the word, he went to the gospel of St. James, and to the sermon on the Mount by Christ himself, for whose truly divine spirit he entertained the greatest reverence. There was nothing which embittered his reviewers against him more than the knowledge

to the lot of a child to have illustrious descent so heaped upon him; his mother a woman of talents, his father a man of genius, his grandfather, Mr. Godwin, a writer secure of immortality; his grandmother, Mr. Godwin's wife, the celebrated Mary Wollstonecraft; and on the side of Mr. Shelley's ancestors he partakes of the blood of the intellectual as well as patrician family of the Sackvilles.

of this fact, and his refusal to identify their superstitions and worldly use of the Christian doctrines with the just idea of a great Reformer and advocate of the many; one, whom they would have been the first to cry out against, had he appeared now. His want of faith, indeed, in one sense of the word, and his exceeding faith in the existence of goodness and the great doctrine of charity, formed a comment, the one on the other, very formidable to the less troublesome constructions of the orthodox.

Some alarmists at Marlow said, that if he went on at this rate, he would make all the poor people infidels. He went on, till ill health and calumny, and the love of his children, forced him abroad. During his residence at Marlow, Mr. Shelley published a "Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote" throughout England: for which purpose, as an earnest of his sincerity, he offered to contribute a hundred pounds. This hundred pounds (which owing to his liberal habits he could very ill spare at the time) he would have done his best to supply, by saving and economizing. It was not uncommon with him to give away all his ready money, and be compelled to take a journey on foot or on the top of a stage, no matter during what weather. His constitution, though naturally consumptive, had attained, by temperance and exercise, to a surprising power of resisting fatigue. As an instance of his extraordinary generosity, an acquaintance of his, a man of letters, enjoyed from him at that period a pension of a hundred a-year; and he continued to enjoy it, till fortune rendered it superfluous. But the princeliness of his disposition was seen most in his behaviour to his friend, the writer of this memoir, who is proud to relate, that Mr. Shelley once made him a present of fourteen hundred pounds, to extricate him from debt. I was not extricated, for I had not yet learnt to be careful: but the shame of not being so, after such generosity, and the pain which my friend afterwards underwent, when I was in trouble and he was helpless, were the first causes of my thinking of money-matters to any purpose. His last sixpence was ever at my service, had I chosen to share it; his house in Italy would ever have been shared with me, had I thought it right to go thither. I went at last, with happy views for all; and of the three who set up a



work against tyranny, am the only one that survive. It is remarkable that in a poetical epistle written some years ago, and published in the volume of "Posthumous Poems," Mr. Shelley, in alluding to his friend's circumstances, which for the second time were then straitened, only makes an affectionate lamentation that he himself is poor; never once hinting, that he had already drained his purse for his friend.

From Marlow, Mr. Shelley went with his wife, and a new family to Italy, where he lived in his usual quiet and retired manner. He had become acquainted with Lord Byron during a former visit to the Continent; and the acquaintance was now renewed. He visited his Lordship at Venice; but it was only latterly that he saw much of him, when they both lived at Pisa. He had the highest admiration of his Lordship's genius; but they differed, as might be expected, on many other points. Lord Byron thought his philosophy too spiritual and romantic. Mr. Shelley thought his Lordship's too material and despairing. The noble Lord often expressed the highest opinion of his companion's virtues, and of his freedom from selfishness. An account has been published of a voyage to Sicily, in which Mr. Shelley is described as behaving with a want of courage. To those who knew him, it is unnecessary to repeat, that the whole account is a fabrication, voyage and all. Lord Byron and he never were in Sicily, nor ever sailed together, except on the Lake of Geneva. Mr. Shelley's bravery was remarkable, and was the ultimate ruin of him. In a scuffle that took place on horseback, in the streets of Pisa, with a hot-headed dragoon, he behaved with a courage so distinguished, and with so much thought for every body but himself, that Lord Byron wondered upon what principle a man could be induced to prefer any other person's life in that manner, before his own. The solution of the difficulty was to be found in their different views of human nature. Mr. Shelley would have lost his life with pleasure, to set an example of disinterestedness; Lord Byron could do striking public things. Greece, and an admiring public, still re-echo them. But the course of his Lordship's studies had led him to require, that they should be mixed up with other stimulants.

A very melancholy period of my narrative is now arrived. In June 1822, I arrived in Italy, in consequence of the invitation to set up a work with my friend and Lord Byron. Mr. Shelley was passing the summer season at a house he had taken for that purpose on the Gulf of Lerici. He wrote to me at Genoa to say that he hoped "the waves would never part us again;" and on hearing of my arrival at Leghorn, came thither, accompanied by Mr. Williams, formerly of the 8th Dragoons, who was then on a visit to him. He came to welcome his friend and family, and see us comfortably settled at Pisa. He accordingly went with us to that city, and after remaining in it a few days, took leave on the night of the 7th July, to return with Mr. Williams to Lerici, meaning to come back to us shortly. In a day or two the voyagers were missed. The afternoon of the 8th had been stormy, with violent squalls from the south-west. A night succeeded, broken up with that tremendous thunder and lightning, which appals the stoutest seaman in the Mediterranean, dropping its bolts in all directions more like melted brass, or liquid pillars of fire, than any thing we conceive of lightning in our northern climate. The suspense and anguish of their friends need not be dwelt upon. A dreadful interval took place of more than a week, during which every inquiry and every fond hope were exhausted. At the end of that period our worst fears were confirmed. The following narrative of the particulars is from the pen of Mr. Trelawney, a friend of Lord Byron's, who had not long been acquainted with Mr. Shelley; but entertained the deepest regard for him. On the present occasion, nothing could surpass his generous and active sympathy. During the whole of the proceedings that took place, Mr. Shelley's and Mr. Williams's friends were indebted to Mr. Trelawney for every kind of attention: the great burden of inquiry fell upon him; and he never ceased his good offices, either then or afterwards, till he had done every thing that could have been expected to be done either of the humblest or the highest friend.

MR. TRELAWNEY'S NARRATIVE OF THE LOSS OF THE BOAT CONTAINING MR. SHELLEY AND MR. WILLIAMS, ON THE 8TH OF JULY, 1822, OFF THE COAST OF ITALY. (NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.)

“Mr. Shelley, Mr. Williams (formerly of the 8th Dragoons,) and one seaman, Charles Vivian, left Villa Magni near Lerici, a small town situate in the Bay of Spezia, on the 30th of June, at twelve o'clock, and arrived the same night at Leghorn. Their boat had been built for Mr. Shelley at Genoa by a captain in the navy. It was twenty-four feet long, eight in the beam, schooner rigged, with graft topsails, &c. and drew four feet water. On Monday, the 8th of July, at the same hour, they got under weigh to return home, having on board a quantity of household articles, four hundred dollars, a small canoe and some books and manuscripts. At half past twelve they made all sail out of the harbour with a light and favourable breeze, steering direct for Spezia. I had likewise weighed anchor to accompany them a few miles out in Lord Byron's schooner, the Bolivar; but there was some demur about papers from the guard-boat; and they, fearful of losing the breeze sailed without me. I re-anchored, and watched my friends, till their boat became a speck on the horizon, which was growing thick and dark, with heavy clouds moving rapidly, and gathering in the south-west quarter. I then retired to the cabin, where I had not been half an hour, before a man on deck told me, a heavy squall had come on. We let go another anchor. The boats and vessels in the roads were scudding past us in all directions to get into the harbour; and in a moment, it blew a hard gale from the south-west, the sea, from excessive smoothness, foaming, breaking, and getting up into a very heavy swell. The wind, having shifted, was now directly against my friends. I felt confident they would be obliged to bear off for Leghorn; and being anxious to hear of their safety, stayed on board till a late hour, but saw nothing of them. The violence of the wind did not continue above an hour: it then gradually subsided; and at eight o'clock, when I went on shore,



it was almost a calm. It, however, blew hard at intervals during the night, with rain, and thunder and lightning. The lightning struck the mast of a vessel close to us, shivering it to splinters, killing two men, and wounding others. From these circumstances, becoming greatly alarmed for the safety of the voyagers, a note was despatched to Mr. Shelley's house at Lerici, the reply to which stated that nothing had been heard of him and his friend, which augmented our fears to such a degree, that couriers were despatched on the whole line of coast from Leghorn to Nice, to ascertain if they had put in any where, or if there had been any wreck, or indication of losses by sea. I immediately started for Via Reggio, having lost sight of the boat in that direction. My worst fears were almost confirmed on my arrival there, by news that a small canoe, two empty water-barrels, and a bottle, had been found on the shore, which things I recognised as belonging to the boat. I had still, however, warm hopes that these articles had been thrown overboard to clear them from useless lumber in the storm; and it seemed a general opinion that they had missed Leghorn, and put into Elba or Corsica, as nothing more was heard for eight days. This state of suspense becoming intolerable, I returned from Spezia to Via Reggio, where my worst fears were confirmed by the information that two bodies had been washed on shore, one on that night very near the town, which, by the dress and stature, I knew to be Mr. Shelley's. Mr. Keats's last volume of "*Lamia*," "*Isabella*," &c. being open in the jacket pocket, confirmed it beyond a doubt. The body of Mr. Williams was subsequently found near a tower on the Tuscan shore, about four miles from his companion. Both the bodies were greatly decomposed by the sea, but identified beyond a doubt. The seaman, Charles Vivian, was not found for nearly three weeks afterwards. His body was interred in the spot on which a wave had washed it, in the vicinity of Massa.

"After a variety of applications to the Lucchese and Tuscan Governments, and our Ambassador at Florence, I obtained, from the kindness and exertions of Mr. Dawkins, an order to the officer commanding the tower of Migliarino, (near to which Lieutenant Williams had been

cast, and buried in the sand,) that the body should be at my disposal. I likewise obtained an order to the same effect to the Commandant at Via Reggio, to deliver up the remains of Mr. Shelley, it having been decided by the friends of the parties that the bodies should be reduced to ashes by fire, as the readiest mode of conveying them to the places where the deceased would have wished to repose, as well as of removing all objections respecting the Quarantine Laws, which had been urged against their disinterment. Every thing being prepared for the requisite purposes, I embarked on board Lord Byron's schooner with my friend Captain Shenley, and sailed on the 13th of August. After a tedious passage of eleven hours, we anchored off Via Reggio, and fell in with two small vessels, which I had hired at Leghorn some days before for the purpose of ascertaining, by the means used to recover sunken vessels, the place in which my friend's boat had foundered. They had on board the captain of a fishing-boat, who, having been overtaken in the same squall, had witnessed the sinking of the boat, without (as he says) the possibility of assisting her. After dragging the bottom, in the place which he indicated, for six days without finding her, I sent them back to Leghorn, and went on shore. The Major commanding the town, with the Captain of the port, accompanied me to the Governor. He received us very courteously, and did not object to the removal of our friend's remains, but to burning them, as the latter was not specified in the order. However, after some little explanation, he assented, and we gave the necessary directions for making every preparation to commence our painful undertaking next morning."

It was thought that the whole of these melancholy operations might have been performed in one day: but the calculation turned out to be erroneous. Mr. Williams's remains were commenced with. Mr. Trelawney and Captain Shenley were at the tower by noon, with proper persons to assist, and were joined shortly by Lord Byron and myself. A portable furnace and a tent had been prepared. "Wood," continues Mr. Trelawney, "we found in abundance on the beach, old trees and parts of wrecks. Within a few paces of the spot where

the body lay, there was a rude-built shed of straw, forming a temporary shelter for soldiers at night, when performing the coast-patrole duty. The grave was at high-water mark, some eighteen paces from the surf, as it was then breaking, the distance about four miles and a half from Via Reggio. The magnificent bay of Spezia is on the right of this spot, Leghorn on the left, at equal distances of about twenty-two miles. The headlands, projecting boldly and far into the sea, form a deep and dangerous gulf, with a heavy swell and a strong current generally running right into it. A vessel embayed in the gulf, and overtaken by one of the squalls so common upon the coast of it, is almost certain to be wrecked. The loss of small craft is great; and the shallowness of the water, and breaking of the surf, preventing approach to the shore, or boats going out to assist, the loss of lives is in proportion. It was in the centre of this bay, about four or five miles at sea, in fifteen or sixteen fathom water, with a light breeze under a crowd of sail, that the boat of our friends was suddenly taken clap aback by a sudden and very violent squall; and it is supposed that in attempting to bear up under such a press of canvass, all the sheets fast, the hands unprepared, and only three persons on board, the boat filled to leeward, and having two tons of ballast, and not being decked, went down on the instant; not giving them a moment to prepare themselves by even taking off their boots, or seizing an oar. Mr. Williams was the only one who could swim, and he but indifferently. The spot where Mr. Williams's body lay was well adapted for a man of his imaginative cast of mind, and I wished his remains to rest undisturbed; but it was willed otherwise. Before us was the sea, with islands; behind us the Apennines; beside us, a large tract of thick wood, stunted and twisted into fantastic shapes by the sea-breeze. The heat was intense, the sand being so scorched as to render standing on it painful."

Mr. Trelawney proceeds to describe the disinterment and burning of Mr. Williams's remains. Calumny, which never shows itself grosser than its charges of want of refinement, did not spare even these melancholy ceremonies. The friends of the deceased, though they took no pains to publish the proceeding, were accused of wish-



ing to make a sensation; of doing a horrible and unfeeling thing, &c. The truth was, that the nearest connexions, both of Mr. Shelley and Mr. Williams, wished to have their remains interred in regular places of burial; and that for this purpose they could be removed in no other manner. Such being the case, it is admitted that the mourners did not refuse themselves the little comfort of supposing, that lovers of books and antiquity, like Mr. Shelley and his friend, would not have been sorry to foresee this part of their fate. Among the materials for burning, as many of the gracefuller and more classical articles as could be procured—frankincense, wine, &c. were not forgotten.

The proceedings of the next day, with Mr. Shelley's remains, exactly resembled those of the foregoing, with the exception of their being two assistants less. The inaccuracies of Captain Medwin on this subject I have noticed before. On both days, the extraordinary beauty of the flame arising from the funeral pile was noticed. The weather was beautifully fine. The Mediterranean now soft and lucid, kissed the shore as if to make peace with it. The yellow sand and blue sky intensely contrasted with one another: marble mountains touched the air with coolness, and the flame of the fire bore away towards heaven in vigorous amplitude, waving and quivering with a brightness of inconceivable beauty. It seemed as though it contained the glassy essence of vitality. You might have expected a seraphic countenance to look out of it, turning once more, before it departed, to thank the friends that had done their duty.

Among the various conjectures respecting this lamentable event, a suspicion was not wanting, that the boat had been run down by a larger one with a view to plunder it. Mr. Shelley was known to have taken money on board. Crimes of that nature had occurred often enough to warrant such a suspicion; and they could be too soon washed out of the consciences of the ignorant perpetrators by confession. But it was lost in the more probable conclusion arising from the weather. One bitter consolation to the friends of Mr. Shelley was, that his death, as far as he alone was concerned, was of a nature he would have preferred to many others, probably to any.

A reflection, more pleasing, reminded them, that in the rapid decomposition occasioned by the sea and the fire, the mortal part of him was saved from that gradual corruption, which is seldom contemplated without shuddering by a lively imagination. And yet the same imagination and suffering which make us cling to life at one time, and give us a horror of dissolution, can render the grave desirable and even beautiful at another. Mr. Shelley's remains were taken to Rome, and deposited in the protestant burial-ground, near those of a child he had lost in that city, and of Mr. Keats. It is the cemetery he speaks of in the preface to his *Elegy on the death of his young friend*, as calculated to "make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place." A like tenderness of patience, in one who possessed a like energy, made Mr. Keats say on his death-bed, that he "seemed to feel the daisies growing over him." These are the feelings that servile critics ridicule, and that all other human beings respect. The generous reader will be glad to hear, that the remains of Mr. Shelley were attended to their final abode by some of the most respectable English residents in Rome. He was sure to awaken the sympathy of gallant and accomplished spirits wherever he went, alive or dead. The remains of Mr. Williams were taken to England. Mr. Williams was a very intelligent, good-hearted man, and his death was deplored by friends worthy of him.

The writer who criticised the "*Posthumous Poems*," in the "*Edinburgh Review*," does justice to the excellence of Mr. Shelley's intentions, and acknowledges him to be one of those rare persons called men of genius; but accuses him of a number of faults, which he attributes to the predominance of his will, and a scorn of every thing received and conventional. To this cause he traces the faults of his poetry, and what he conceives to be the errors of his philosophy. Furthermore, he charges Mr. Shelley with a want of reverence for antiquity, and quotes a celebrated but not unequivocal passage from Bacon, where the philosopher, according to the advice of the Prophet, recommends us to take our stand upon the ancient ways, and see what road we are to take for progression. He says Mr. Shelley had "too little sym-

pathy with the feelings of others, which he thought he had a right to sacrifice, as well as his own, to a grand ethical experiment; and asserts that if a thing were old and established, this was with him a certain proof of its having no solid foundation to rest upon: if it was new, it was good and right: every paradox was to him a self-evident truth: every prejudice an undoubted absurdity. The weight of authority, the sanction of ages, the common consent of mankind, were vouchers only for ignorance, error, and imposture. Whatever shocked the feelings of others, conciliated his regard; whatever was light, extravagant, and vain, was to him a proportionable relief from the dulness and stupidity of established opinions." This is caricature; and caricature of an imaginary original.

Alas! Mr. Shelley was so little relieved by what was light and vain, (if I understand what the Reviewer means by those epithets,) and so little disposed to quarrel with the common consent of mankind, where it seemed reasonably founded, that at first he could not endure even the comic parts of Lord Byron's writings, because he thought they tended to produce mere volatility instead of good; and he afterwards came to relish them, because he found an accord with them in the bosoms of society. Whatever shocked the feeling of others so little conciliated his regard, that with the exception of matters of religion (which is a point on which the most benevolent Reformers, authors of "grand ethical experiments," in all ages, have thought themselves warranted in hazarding alarm and astonishment,) his own feelings were never more violated than by disturbances given to delicacy, to sentiment, to the affections. If ever it seemed otherwise, as in the subject of his tragedy of the Cenci, it was only out of a more intense apprehensiveness, and the right it gave him to speak. He saw, in every species of tyranny and selfish will, an image of all the rest of the generation. That a love of paradox is occasionally of use to remind common-places of their weakness, and to prepare the way for liberal opinions, nobody knows better or has more unequivocally shown than Mr. Shelley's critic; and yet I am not aware that Mr. Shelley was at all addicted to paradox; or that he loved any contradiction, that did not directly



contradict some great and tyrannical abuse. Prejudices that he thought innocent, no man was more inclined to respect, or even to fall in with. He was prejudiced in favour of the dead languages; he had a theoretical antipathy to innovations in style; he had almost an English dislike of the French and their literature, a philosopher or two excepted: it cost him much to reconcile himself to manners that were not refined; and even with regard to the prejudices of superstition, or the more poetical sides of popular faith, where they did not interfere with the daily and waking comforts of mankind, he was for admitting them with more than a spirit of toleration. It would be hazardous to affirm that he did not believe in spirits and genii. This is not setting his face against "every received mystery, and all traditional faith." He set his face, not against a mystery nor a self-evident proposition, but against whatever he conceived to be injurious to human good, and whatever his teachers would have forced down his throat, in defiance of the inquiries they had suggested. His opposition to what was established, as I have said before, is always to be considered with reference to that feature in his disposition, and that fact in his history. Of antiquity and authority he was so little a scorner, that his opinions, novel as some of them may be thought, are all to be found in writers, both ancient and modern, and those not obscure ones or empirical, but men of the greatest and wisest, and best names,—Plato and Epicurus, Montaigne, Bacon, Sir Thomas More. Nothing in him was his own, but the genius that impelled him to put philosophical speculations in the shape of poetry, and a subtle and magnificent style, abounding in Hellenisms, and by no means exempt (as he acknowledged) from a tendency to imitate whatever else he thought beautiful, in ancient or modern writers.

But Mr. Shelley was certainly definite in his object: he thought it was high time for society to come to particulars: to know what they would have. With regard to marriage, for instance, he was tired with the spectacle continually presented to his eyes, of a community always feeling sore upon that point, and cowed, like a man by his wife, from attempting some real improve-

ment in it. There was no end, he thought, of setting up this new power, and pulling down that, if the one, to all real home purposes, proceeded just as the other did, and nothing was gained to society but a hope and a disappointment. This, in his opinion, was not the kind of will to be desired, in opposition to one with more definite objects. We must not, he thought, be eternally generalizing, shilly-shallying, and coquetting between public submission and private independence; but let a generous understanding and acknowledgment of what we are in want of, go hand in hand with our exertions in behalf of change; otherwise, when we arrive at success, we shall find success itself in hands that are but physically triumphant—hands that hold up a victory on a globe, a splendid common-place, as a new-old thing for us to worship. This, to be sure, is standing, *super vias antiquas*; but not in order to “make progression.” The thing is all to be done over again. If there is “something rotten in the state of Denmark,” let us mend it, and not set up Sweden or Norway, to knock down this rottenness with rottenness of their own; continually waiting for others to do our work, and finding them do it in such a manner, as to deliver us bound again into the hands of the old corruptions. We must be our own deliverers. An Essay on the Disinterestedness of Human Action is much; but twenty articles to show that the most disinterested person in the world is only a malcontent and a fanatic, can be of no service but to baffle conduct and resolution, in favour of eternal theory and the talking about it.

Mr. Shelley had no doubt a great deal of will; but the mistake of the Reviewer lies in giving it an antipathetical, instead of a sympathetic character. This may be the fault of some reformers. It may also be a fault of others to lament the want of will in their brethren at one time, and the excess of it at another, but particularly the want; satirising the sparing and fastidious conduct of the better part of the lovers of freedom, “the inconsistent, vacillating good,” and bewailing the long misfortunes of the world, which a few energetic persons might put an end to by a resolute and unconditional exercise of their free agency. The writer in question is not exempt from

these inconsistencies. I do not accuse him of want of sympathy. On the contrary, I think the antipathies which he has sometimes given way to so strangely, and the will which he at other times recommends, and at all times sets an example of, arise out of the impatience of his very sympathy with mankind. This it is, which together with his own extraordinary amount of talent, and the interesting evidences of it which continually appear, has for so long a time kept his friends in good blood with him, whatever mood he has happened to be in; though he has tried them, of late, pretty hard. But this it is also, which ought to have led him into a different judgment with regard to Mr. Shelley. A greater portion of will among reformers is desirable; but it does not follow that an occasional excess of it (if such) can or does do the mischief he supposes, or furnishes any excuse worth mention for the outcries and pretended arguments of the opposite party. If he will have a good deal of will, he must occasionally have an excess of it. The party in question, that is to say, all the bad systems and governments existing, with all their slaves and dependents, have an infinite will of their own, which they already make use of, with all their might, to put down every endeavour against it: and the world in general is so deafened with the noise of ordinary things, and the great working of the system which abuses it, that an occasional excess in the lifting up of a reforming voice appears to be necessary to make it listen. It requires the example of a spirit not so prostrate as its own, to make it believe that all hearts are not alike kept under, and that the hope of reformation is not every where given up. This is the excuse for such productions as *Werter*, the *Stranger*, and other appeals to the first principles of sympathy and disinterestedness. This is the excuse for the paradoxes of Rousseau; for the extravagances of some of the Grecian philosophers (which were necessary to call the attention to all parts of a question;) and if I did not wish to avoid hazarding misconception, and hurting the feelings, however unreasonably, of any respectable body of men, I might add stronger cases, in point; cases, in which principles have been pushed to their greatest and most impracticable excess, for the pur-



pose, we are told, of securing some attention to the reasonable part of them. Mr. Shelley objected to the present state of the intercourse of the sexes, and the vulgar notions of the Supreme Being. He also held with Sir Thomas More, that a community of property was desirable; an opinion, which obtained him more ill-will, perhaps, than any other, at least in the class among which he was born. The Reviewer implies, that he put forth some of these objections alarmingly or extravagantly. Be it so. The great point is to have a question discussed. The advocates of existing systems of all sorts are strong enough to look to the defence; whereas, those who suffer by them are so much intimidated by their very sufferings, as to be afraid to move, lest they should be worse off than they are at present. They do not want to know their calamity; they know it well enough. They require to be roused, and not always to sit groaning over, or making despairing jests of their condition. If a friend's excess excites them to differ with him, they are still incited to look at the question. His sympathy moves them to be ashamed of their passiveness, and to consider what may be done. We need not fear, that it will be too much. At the very least, matters will find their level. If we are our own masters under Providence; if Nature works with us for tools, and intends amelioration through the means of our knowledge, we are roused to some purpose. If not, or if we are to go so far and no farther, no farther shall we go. The sweet or bitter waters of humanity will assuredly find where to settle.

The Reviewer, still acknowledging the Genius of Mr. Shelley, and his benevolent intentions, finds the same fault with his poetry as with his philosophy, and traces it to the same causes. Of all my friend's writings, the poetical parts are those which I should least conceive to subject him to the charge of want of sympathy. Is the quarrelling with constituted authorities and received calamities, the same thing as scorning the better part of what exists? Is the quitting the real world for the ideal in search of consolation, the same thing as thrusting one's foot against it in contempt, and flying off on the wings of antipathy? And what did Mr. Shelley carry thither

when he went? A perpetual consciousness of his humanity; a clinging load of the miseries of his fellow creatures. The *Witch of Atlas*, for example, is but a personification of the imaginative faculty in its most airy abstractions; and yet the author cannot indulge himself long in that fairy region, without *dreaming* of mortal strife. If he is not in this world, he must have visions of it. If fiction is his reality by day, reality will be his fiction during his slumbers. The truth is, Mr. Shelley was in his whole being, mental and physical, of an extreme delicacy and sensibility. He felt every part of his nature intensely; and his impulse, object, and use in this world, was to remind others of some important points touching our common nature and endeavours, by affording a more than ordinary example of their effect upon himself. It may be asked, who are to be reminded? how many? To which we answer, those who have been reminded already, as well as the select portion who remain to be so; never mind how few, provided they are reminded to some purpose. Mr. Shelley's writings, it is admitted, are not calculated to be popular, however popular in their ultimate tendency, or cordial in their origin. They are, for the most part, too abstract and refined. But "fit audience though few," is the motto of the noblest ambition; and it is these audiences that go and settle the world.

Mr. Shelley's poetry is invested with a dazzling and subtle radiance, which blinds the common observer with light. Piercing beyond this, we discover that the characteristics of his poetical writings are an exceeding sympathy with the whole universe, material and intellectual; an ardent desire to benefit his species; an impatience of the tyrannies and superstitions that hold them bound; and a regret that the power of one loving and enthusiastic individual is not proportioned to his will, nor his good reception with the world at all proportioned to his love. His poetry is either made up of all these feelings united, or is an attempt to escape from their pressure into the widest fields of imagination. I say an attempt,—because, as we have seen, escape he does not; and it is curious to observe how he goes pouring forth his baffled affections upon every object he can think of, bringing out

its beauties and pretensions by the light of a radiant fancy, and resolved to do the whole detail of the universe a sort of poetical justice, in default of being able to make his fellow-creatures attend to justice political. From this arises the fault of his poetry, which is a want of massiveness,—of a proper distribution of light and shade. The whole is too full of glittering points; of images touched and illustrated alike, and brought out into the same prominence. He ransacks every thing like a bee, grappling with it in the same spirit of penetration and enjoyment, till you lose sight of the field he entered upon, in following him into his subtle recesses. He is also too fond, in his larger works, of repeating the same images drawn from the material universe and the sea. When he is obliged to give up these peculiarities, and to identify his feelings and experience with those of other people, as in his dramatic poems, the fault no longer exists. His object remains,—that of increasing the wisdom and happiness of mankind: but he has laid aside his wings, and added to the weight and purpose of his body: the spiritual part of him is invested with ordinary flesh and blood. In truth, for ordinary or immediate purposes, a great deal of Mr. Shelley's poetry ought to have been written in prose. It consists of philosophical speculations which required an introduction to the understandings of the community, and not merely, as he thought, a recommendation to their good will. The less philosophic he becomes, reverting to his own social feelings, as in some of the pathetic complaints before us; or appealing to the common ones of mankind upon matters immediately agitating them, as in the "Ode to Naples;" or giving himself fairly up to the sports of fancy, as in the "Witch of Atlas," or "The Translations from Goethe and Homer;" the more he delights and takes with him, those who did not know whether to argue, or to feel, in some of his larger works. The common reader is baffled with the perplexing mixture of passion and calmness; of the severest reasoning, and the wildest fiction; of the most startling appearances of dissent, and the most conventional calls upon sympathy. But in all his writings there is a wonderful sustained sensibility, and a language lofty and fit for it. He has the art of



using the stateliest words and the most learned idioms, without incurring the charge of pedantry; so that passages of more splendid and sonorous writing are not to be selected from any writer, since the time of Milton: and yet when he descends from his ideal worlds, and comes home to us in our humbler bowers, and our yearnings after love and affection, he attunes the most natural feelings to a style so proportionate, and withal to a modulation so truly musical, that there is nothing to surpass it in the lyrics of Beaumont and Fletcher.

Let the reader, whom these pages may have rendered more desirous of knowing Mr. Shelley, turn to the volume in question, and judge for himself in what sort of spirit it was that he wrote the "Witch of Atlas," the "Letter" to a Friend at p. 59, part of the "Ode to Naples," the "Song" at p. 141, a "Lament," the "Question," "Lines to an Indian Air," "Stanzas written in dejection near Naples," Lines on a "Faded Violet," "Lines to a Critic," "To-morrow," "Good Night," "Love's Philosophy," the "Stanzas" at p. 214, and the "Translations from Goethe and Homer." The verses "On the Medusa's Head of Leonardo da Vinci" are perhaps as fine as any thing in the book, for power. The poetry seems sculptured and grinning, like the subject. The words are cut with a knife. But love is the great inspirer of Mr. Shelley. His very abstract ideas are in love.

"The deep recesses of her odorous dwelling  
Were stored with magic treasures—sounds of air,  
Which had the power all spirits of compelling,  
Folded in cells of crystal silence there;  
Such as we hear in youth, and think the feeling  
Will never die—yet ere we are aware,  
The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,  
And the regret they leave remains alone.

"And there lay Visions, swift, and sweet, and quaint,  
Each in its thin sheath like a chrysalis;  
Some eager to burst forth, some weak and faint  
With the soft burthen of intensest bliss.

We have heard of ladies falling in love with Lord Byron, upon the strength of Don Juan. These must be ladies in towns. If ever a more sequestered heroine could become enamoured of a poet out of the mere force of sen-

timent, or at least desire to give him exceeding comfort and consolation, it would be such a poet as Mr. Shelley. The most physical part of the passion acquires, from his treatment of it, a grace and purity inexpressible. It is curious to see with what fearlessness, in the conscious dignity of this power, he ventures to speak of things that would defy all mention from a less ingenuous lip. The "Witch of Atlas," will be liked by none but poets, or very poetical readers. Spenser would have liked it: Sir Kenelm Digby would have written a comment upon it. Its meanings are too remote, and its imagery too wild, to be enjoyed by those who cannot put on wings of the most subtle conception, and remain in the uttermost parts of idealism. Even those who can, will think it something too dreamy and involved. They will discover the want of light and shade, which I have before noticed, and which leaves the picture without its due breadth and perspective. It is the fault of some of Mr. Shelley's poems, that they look rather like store-houses of imagery, than imagery put into proper action. We have the misty regions of wide air,

"The hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,—"

which Milton speaks of; but they are too much in their elementary state, as if just about to be used, and moving in their first chaos. To a friend, who pointed out to him this fault, Mr. Shelley said, that he would consider it attentively, and doubted not he should profit by the advice. He scorned advice as little as he did any other help to what was just and good. He could both give and take it with an exquisite mixture of frankness and delicacy, that formed one of the greatest evidences of his superiority to common virtue. I have mentioned before, that his temper was admirable. He was naturally irritable and violent; but had so mastered the infirmity, as to consider every body's inclinations before his own. Mr. Trelawney pronounced him to be a man absolutely without selfishness. In his intercourse with myself, nothing delighted him more than to confound the limits of our respective property, in money-matters, books, apparel, &c. He would help himself without scruple to whatever he wanted, whether a book or a waistcoat; and was never

better pleased, than at finding things of his own in his friend's possession.

The way in which Mr. Shelley's eye darted "from heaven to earth," and the sort of call at which his imagination was ever ready to descend, is well exemplified in the following passage of the *Letter* at p. 59. The unhappy mass of prostitution which exists in England, contrasted with something which seems to despise it, and which, in more opinions than his, is a main cause of it, was always one of the subjects that at a moment's notice would overshadow the liveliest of his moods. The picturesque line in italics is beautifully true. The poet is writing to a friend in London.

"Unpavilioned heaven is fair,  
Whether the moon, into her chamber gone,  
Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or wan  
Climbs with diminish'd beams the azure steep;  
Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse deep,  
Piloted by the many-wandering blast,  
*And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.*  
All this is beautiful in every land.  
But what see you beside? A shabby stand  
Of hackney coaches—a brick house or wall,  
Fencing some lonely court, white with the scrawl  
Of our unhappy politics; or worse.  
A wretched woman, reeling by, whose curse  
Mix'd with the watchman's, partner of her trade,  
You must accept in place of serenade."

These miserable women, sometimes indeed owing to the worst and most insensible qualities on their own parts, but sometimes also to the best and most guileless, are at such a dreadful disadvantage compared with those who are sleeping at such an hour in their comfortable homes, that it is difficult to pitch our imaginations among the latter, for a refuge from the thought of them. Real love, however, even if it be unhappy, provided its sorrow be without contempt and sordidness, will furnish us with a transition less startling. The following *Lines to an Indian Air*, make an exquisite serenade.

"I arise from dreams of thee  
In the first sweet sleep of night,  
When the winds are breathing low,  
And the stars are shining bright;



I arise from dreams of thee,  
And a spirit in my feet  
Has led me—who knows how?  
To thy chamber-window, sweet!

“The wandering airs they faint  
On the dark, the silent stream—  
The champak odours fall,  
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;  
The nightingale’s complaint  
It dies upon her heart,  
As I must upon thine,  
Beloved as thou art!

“O lift me from the grass!  
I die, I faint, I fail!  
Let thy love in kisses rain  
On my lips and eyelids pale.  
My cheek is cold and white, alas!  
My heart beats loud and fast;  
Oh! press it close to thine again  
Where it will break at last.”

I know not that two main parts of Mr. Shelley’s poetical genius, the descriptive and the pathetic, ever vented themselves to more touching purpose than in the lines *Written in Dejection near Naples*. The brilliant yet soft picture with which they commence, introduces the melancholy observer of it in a manner extremely affecting. He beholds what delights others, and is willing to behold it, though it delights him not. He even apologizes for “insulting” the bright day he has painted so beautifully, with his “untimely moan.” The stanzas exhibit, at once, minute observation, the widest power to generalize, exquisite power to enjoy, and admirable patience at the want of enjoyment. This latter combination forms the height of the amiable, as the former does of the intellectual character. The fourth stanza will strongly move the reader of this memoir.

“The sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and bright,  
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear  
The purple moon’s transparent light  
† \* \* \* \* \*  
Around its unexpanded buds;  
Like many a voice of one delight,  
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City’s voice itself is soft, like Solitude’s.

† A line is wanting in the Edition.

"I see the deep's untrampled floor  
 With green and purple sea-weeds strown;  
 I see the waves upon the shore,  
*Like light dissolved in star-showers*, thrown.  
 I sit upon the sands alone;  
 The lightning of the noon-tide ocean  
 Is flashing round me, and a tone  
 Arises from its measured motion,  
 How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

"Alas! I have nor hope, nor health,  
 Nor peace within, nor calm around,  
 Nor that content surpassing wealth,  
 The sage in meditation found,  
 And walked with inward glory crowned;  
 Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.  
 Others I see whom these surround;  
 Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—  
 To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

"Yet now despair itself is mild,  
 Ev'n as the winds and waters are;  
*I could lie down like a tired child,*  
*And weep away the life of care*  
 Which I have borne and yet must bear,  
 Till death, like sleep, might steal on me,  
*And I might feel in the warm air*  
*My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea*  
*Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.*

"Some might lament that I were cold,  
 As I when this sweet day is done,  
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,  
 Insults with this untimely moan:  
 They might lament, for I am one  
 Whom men love not, and yet regret;  
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
 Shall on its stainless glory set,  
 Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet."

The pieces, that call to mind Beaumont and Fletcher,  
 are such as the following:—

"Music, when soft voices die,  
 Vibrates in the memory;  
 Odours, when sweet violets sicken,  
 Live within the sense they quicken.

"Rose-leaves, when the rose is dead,  
 Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;  
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,  
 Love itself shall slumber on."

"*Love's Philosophy*" is another. It has been often printed; but for the same reason will bear repetition.

The sentiment must be understood with reference to the delicacy as well as freedom of Mr. Shelley's opinions, and not as supplying any excuse to that heartless libertinism which no man disdained more. The poem is here quoted for its grace and lyrical sweetness.

"The fountains mingle with the river,  
And the river with the ocean ;  
The winds of heaven mix for ever,  
With a sweet emotion :  
Nothing in the world is single ;  
All things by a law divine  
In one another's being mingle—  
Why not I with thine ?

" See the mountains kiss high heaven,  
And the waves clasp one another ;  
No sister flower would be forgiven,  
If it disdain'd its brother :  
And the sunlight clasps the earth,  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea ;  
What are all these kissings worth,  
If thou kiss not me ?"

Mr. Shelley ought to have written nothing but dramas, interspersed with such lyrics as these. Perhaps had he lived, he would have done so; for, after all, he was but young; and he had friends of that opinion, whom he was much inclined to agree with. The fragment of the tragedy of *Charles the First*, in this volume, makes us long for more of it. With all his republicanism, he would have done justice to Charles, as well as to Pym and Hampden. His completest production is unquestionably the tragedy of the "Cenci." The objections to the subject are, on the face of them, not altogether unfounded; but they ought not to weigh with those who have no scruple in grappling with any of the subjects of our old English drama; still less, if they are true readers of that drama, and know how to think of the great ends of poetry in a liberal and masculine manner. "Cenci" is the personification of a will, maddened, like a Roman emperor's, by the possession of impunity; deadened to all sense of right and wrong by degrading notions of a Supreme Being; and consequently subjected to the most frightful wants, and knowing no pleasure but in sensuality or malignity. The least of his actions becomes



villanous, because he does it in defiance of principle. On the other hand, his death by the hand of his outraged daughter produces a different meeting of extremes, because it results, however madly, from horror at the violation of principle. The reader refuses to think that a daughter has slain a *father*, precisely because a dreadful sense of what a father ought not to have done has driven her to it, and because he sees that in any other situation she would be the most exemplary of children. This remark is made for the benefit of the curious reader, and to vindicate Mr. Shelley from having taken up a subject out of pure scorn of his feelings: a strange policy in any author, and not surely to be found in him. Considering what an excellent production the *Cenci* is, it is certainly difficult to help wishing that the subject had been of a nature to startle nobody; but it may be as truly added, that such a subject could have been handled by no other writer in a manner less offensive, or more able to suggest its own vindication.

The Translations that conclude the "Posthumous Poems," are masterly. That of the "Hymn to Mercury," containing the pranks of the Deity when young, abounds in singular animal spirits, a careless yet exuberant feeling of mixed power and indifference, of the zest of new born life, and a godlike superiority to its human manifestations of it, such as we might suppose to take place before vice and virtue were thought of, or only thought of to afford pastime for mischievous young gods, who were above the necessity of behaving themselves. I will confine myself, however, to the quotation of a passage or two from the scenes out of Goethe's "Faust." They contain the *Prologue in Heaven*, which Lord Leveson Gower has omitted in his translation, and the *May-day Night*, which he has abridged, and thought untranslatable. The *Prologue in Heaven* is remarkable for the liberties which a privy-counsellor and gentleman with a star at his breast (for such the original poet is) may take with the scriptural idea of the Divinity, and yet find readers to eulogize and translate him. It is a parody on the beginning of the Book of Job. Not that I believe the illustrious German intended any disrespect to loftier conceptions of a Deity. The magnificent Hymn that pre-

cedes it, shows he can do justice to the noblest images of creation, and improve what other poets have repeated to us of the songs of angels. Mr. Shelley's opinion of the Book of Job (on which he thought of founding a tragedy) was not the less exalted, (nor, I dare say, Goethe's either,) because he could allow himself to make this light and significant comment on the exordium. But it is worth while noticing these sort of discrepancies; and to observe also, how readily they shall be supposed without being comprehended for the sake of one man, and how little comprehended or supposed either for the toleration of another.

SCENE—THE HARTZ MOUNTAIN, A DESOLATE COUNTRY.

*Faust, Mephistophiles.*

*Meph.* Would you not like a broomstick? As for me,  
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;  
For we are still far from th' appointed place.

*Faust.* This knotted staff is help enough for me,  
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good  
Is there in making short a pleasant way?  
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,  
And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs  
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,  
Is the true sport that seasons such a path.  
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,  
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:  
Shall she not work also within our limbs?

*Meph.* Nothing of such an influence do I feel.  
My body is all wintry, and I wish  
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.  
But see; how Melancholy rises now  
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,  
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,  
And gives so bad a light, that every step  
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,  
I'll call an Ignis-Fatuus to our aid;  
I see one yonder burning jollily,  
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you  
Would favour us with your bright company?  
Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?  
Pray, be so good as light us up this way.

*Ignis-Fatuus.* With reverence be it spoken, I will try  
To overcome the lightness of my nature:  
Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag.

*Meph.* Ha! ha! your worship thinks you have to deal  
With men. Go strait on, in the Devil's name,  
Or I shall puff your flickering light out.

*Ignis-Fatuus.*

Well,

I see you are the master of the house;  
I will accommodate myself to you.  
Only consider, that to-night this mountain  
Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern  
Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,  
You ought not to be too exact with him.

*Faust, Mephistophiles, and Ignis-Fatuus, in alternate chorus.*

The limits of the sphere of dream,  
The bounds of true and false, are past.  
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,  
Lead us onward, far and fast,  
To the wide, the desert waste.  
But see how swift advance and shift  
Trees behind trees, row by row,—  
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift  
Their frowning foreheads as we go.  
*The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!*  
*How they snort, and how they blow!*

Through the mossy sods and stones,  
Stream and streamlet hurry down :  
A rushing throng! A sound of song  
Beneath the vault of heaven is blown!

A profound living critic (I forget his name) has discovered, that the couplet in italics is absurd—crags having no snouts properly so called, and being things by no means alive or blowing! The plot now thickens. Every thing is vivified like the rocks; every thing takes a devilish aspect and meaning; the winds rise; the stragglers of the Devil's festival begin to appear, and the travellers feel themselves in the "witch element."

*Faust.*

How

The children of the wind *rage* in the air!  
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Meph.* Dost thou not hear?

Strange accents are ringing  
Aloft, afar, anear,  
The witches are singing!

*The torrent of the raging wizard song  
Streams the whole mountain along.*



*Chorus of Witches.*

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,  
 Now to the Brocken the witches go;  
 The mighty multitude here may be seen  
 Gathering, wizard and witch, below.  
 Sir Urean is sitting aloft in the air;  
 Hey over stock, and hey over stone!  
 'Twixt witches and incubi what shall be done?  
 Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

*A Voice.* Upon a snow-swine, whose farrows were mine,  
 Old Baubo rideth alone.

*Chorus.* Honour her to whom honour is due,  
 Old Mother Baubo! honour to you!  
 An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,  
 Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour  
 The legion of witches is coming behind,  
 Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind.

*A Voice.* Which way comest thou?

*A Voice.* Over Ilsenstein;  
 The owl was awake in the white moonshine;  
 I saw her at rest in her downy nest,  
 And she stared at me with her broad, bright eye.

*Voices.* And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,  
 Since you ride by so fast, on the headlong blast.

*A Voice.* She dropped poison upon me, as I past.  
 Here are the wounds.

*Chorus of Witches.* Come away! come along!  
 The way is wide, the way is long,  
 But what is that for a Bedlam throng!  
 Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.  
 The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,  
 And the mother is clapping her hands.

*Semi-chorus of Wizards—1st.*—We glide in  
 Like snails when the women are all away.  
 From a house once given over to sin,  
 Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

*Semi-chorus—2nd.*—A thousand steps must a woman take,  
 Where a man but a single step will make.

*Voices above.* Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee!\*

*Voices below.* With what joy would we fly through the upper sky;  
 We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we:  
 But our toil and our pain are for ever in vain.

*Both Chorusses.* The wind is still, the stars are fled,  
 The melancholy moon is dead!

\* A gentleman, who reads German, informs me that there must either be a mistake of the transcriber here, or that Mr. Shelley for the moment had left untranslated the concluding word of the line; which is not a proper name, but means a sea of rocks—the Felsen-see.

The magic notes, like spark on spark,  
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.  
Come away!

*Voices below.* Stay, oh, stay!

*Voices above.* Out of the crannies of the rocks,  
Who calls?

*Voice below.* Oh let me join your flocks!  
I three hundred years have striven  
To catch your skirt and mount to heaven,  
And still in vain. Oh, might I be  
In company akin with me!

*Both Chorusses.* Some on a ram, and some on a prong,  
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;  
Forlorn is the weight, who can rise not to-night.

*A Half-witch below.* I have been tripping this many an hour;  
Are the others already so far before?  
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!  
And less methinks is found by the road.

*Chorus of Witches.* Come onward, away! aoint thee, aoint?  
A witch to be strong must anoint, anoint—  
Then every trough will be boat enough;  
With a rag for a sail, he can sweep through the sky,—  
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

*Both Chorusses.* We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;  
Witch legions thicken around and around;  
Wizard swarms cover the heath all over.

(*Th descend.*)

*Meph.* What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;  
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling:  
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning;  
As heaven and earth were overturning.  
*There is a true witch element about us;*  
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided;—  
Where are you?

*Faust.* (*From a distance.*) Here!

*Meph.* What!

I must exert my authority in the house.  
Place for young Voland! pray make way, good people.  
Take hold on me, Doctor, and with one step  
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:  
They are too mad for people of my sort.  
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—  
Something attracts me in those bushes. Come  
This way: we shall slip down there in a minute.

*Faust.* Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on—  
'Twere a wise feat, indeed, to wander out  
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,  
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,  
Disgusted with the humours of the time.

*Meph.* See yonder, round a many-coloured flame  
A merry club is huddled altogether :  
*Even with such little people as sit there.*  
*One would not be alone.*

*Faust.* Would that I were  
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke,  
Where the blind million rush impetuously  
To meet the evil ones ! there might I solve  
Many a riddle that torments me.

*Meph.* Yet  
Many a riddle there is tied anew  
Inextricably. Let the great world rage  
We will stay here, safe in the quiet dwellings.  
It's an old custom. Men have ever built  
Their own small world in the great world of all.

Observe, here, how the author ridicules alike useless inquiries and a selfish passiveness. The great business of life is to be social and beneficent. The witches and their May-game are selfish and vulgar passions of all sorts, hardened into malignity, and believing only in the pleasures of the will. Their turmoil is in vain. Their highest and most superstitious reach to heaven recoils only into disappointment, and a sense of hell. But the author proceeds to have a gird also at dry, mechanical theorists, unalive to sentiment and fancy. No sophistication escapes him. Take a passage or two, eminently infernal.

*Meph.* (*to Faust, who has seceded from the dance.*)  
Why did you let that fair girl pass by you,  
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance ?

*Faust.* A red mouse in the middle of her singing  
Sprung from her mouth.

*Meph.* That was all right, my friend ;  
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.  
Do not disturb your hour of happiness  
With close consideration of such trifles.

This is an image of bad and disgusting passions detected in one whom we love, and in the very midst and heart of our passion !—The following may be interpreted to shadow forth either the consequences of seduction, or the miserable regret with which a man of the world calls to mind his first love, and his belief in goodness.



*Faust.* Then saw I—

*Meph.* What ?

*Faust.* Seest thou not a pale,  
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away ?  
She drags herself now forward with slow steps,  
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet :  
I cannot overcome the thought that she  
Is like poor Margaret.

*Meph.* Let it be—pass on—  
No good can come of it—it is not well  
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,  
A lifeless idol : with its numbing look  
It freezes up the blood of man ; and they  
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,  
Like those who saw Medusa.

*Faust.* Oh too true !  
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse  
Which no beloved hand has closed alas !  
That is the heart which Margaret yielded to me—  
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed !

*Meph.* It is all magic : poor deluded fool !  
She looks to every one like his first love.

*Faust.* Oh what delight ! what wo ! I cannot turn  
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.  
How strangely does a single blood-red line,  
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,  
Adorn her lovely neck !

*Meph.* Ay, she can carry  
Her head under her arm, upon occasion ;  
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures  
End in delusion.

So do not end the pleasures given us by men of genius with great and beneficent views. So does not end the pleasure of endeavouring to do justice to their memories, however painful the necessity. Some good must be done them, however small. Some pleasure cannot but be realized, for a great principle is advocated, and a deep gratitude felt. I differed with Mr. Shelley on one or two important points; but I agreed with him heartily on the most important point of all,—the necessity of doing good, *and of discussing the means of it freely*. I do not think the world so unhappy as he did, or what a very different and much more contented personage has not hesitated to pronounce it,—a “vale of blood and tears.” But I think it quite unhappy enough to require

that we should all set our shoulders to the task of reformation; and this for two reasons: first, that if mankind can effect any thing, they can only effect it by trying, instead of lamenting and being selfish; and second, that if no other good come of our endeavours, we must always be the better for what keeps human nature in hope and activity. That there are monstrous evils to be got rid of, nobody doubts: that we never scruple to get rid of any minor evil that annoys us, any obstacle in our way, or petty want of comfort in our dwellings, we know as certainly. Why the larger ones should be left standing, is yet to be understood. Sir Walter Scott may have no objection to his "vale of blood and tears," provided he can look down upon it from a decent aristocratical height, and a well-stocked mansion; but others have an inconvenient habit of levelling themselves with humanity, and feeling for their neighbours: and it is lucky for Sir Walter himself, that they have so; or Great Britain would not enjoy the comfort she does in her northern atmosphere. The conventional are but the weakest and most thankless children of the unconventional. They live upon the security the others have obtained for them. If it were not for the reformers and innovators of old, the Hampdens, the Miltons, and the Sydneys, life in this country, with all its cares, would not be the convenient thing it is, even for the lowest retainers of the lowest establishment. A feeling of indignation will arise, when we think of great spirits like those, contrasted with the mean ones that venture to scorn their wisdom and self-sacrifice; but it is swallowed up in what absorbed the like emotions in their own minds,—a sense of the many. The mean spirit, if we knew all, need not be denied even his laugh. He may be too much in want of it. But the greatest unhappiness of the noble-minded has moments of exquisite relief. Every thing of beautiful and good that exists, has a kind face for him when he turns to it; or reflects the happy faces of others that enjoy it, if he cannot. He can extract consolation out of discomfiture itself,—if the good he sought otherwise, can come by it. Mr. Shelley felt the contumelies he underwent, with great sensibility; and he expressed himself accordingly; but I know enough

of his nature to be certain, that he would gladly have laid down his life to ensure a good to society, even out of the most lasting misrepresentations of his benevolence. Great is the pleasure to me to anticipate the day of justice, by putting an end to this evil. The friends whom he loved may now bid his brave and gentle spirit repose; for the human beings whom he laboured for, *begin to know him.*



# LETTERS FROM MR. SHELLEY

TO

**MR. LEIGH HUNT.**

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[I REGRET extremely, on the reader's account, as well as my own, that I have not taken better and more grateful care of the letters which my friend wrote to me. I know not how they were lost. I thought I had preserved them better. What I can lay before the public, I do.]

## LETTER I.

Lyons, March 22, 1818.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Why did you not wake me that night before we left England, you and Marianne? I take this as rather an unkind piece of kindness in you; but which, in consideration of the six hundred miles between us, I forgive.

We have journeyed towards the spring that has been hastening to meet us from the south; and though our weather was at first abominable, we have now warm sunny days, and soft winds, and a sky of deep azure, the most serene I ever saw. The heat in this city to-day, is like that of London in the midst of summer. My spirits and health sympathize in the change. Indeed, before I left London, my spirits were as feeble as my health,

and I had demands upon them which I found difficult to supply. I have read *Foliage*:—with most of the poems I was already familiar. What a delightful poem the “*Nymphs*” is! especially the second part. It is truly *poetical*, in the intense and emphatic sense of the word.\* If six hundred miles were not between us, I should say what pity that *glib* was not omitted, and that the poem is not as faultless as it is beautiful. But for fear I should *spoil* your next poem, I will not let slip a word on the subject. Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and tell Marianne she defrauded me of a kiss by not waking me when she went away, and that as I have no better mode of conveying it, I must take the best, and ask you to pay the debt. When shall I see you all again? Oh that it might be in Italy! I confess that the thought of how long we may be divided, makes me very melancholy. Adieu, my dear friends. Write soon.

Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

## LETTER II.

Livorno, August 15, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

How good of you to write to us so often, and such kind letters! But it is like lending to a beggar. What can I offer in return?†

Though surrounded by suffering and disquietude, and latterly almost overcome by our strange misfortune,‡ I have not been idle. My *Prometheus* is finished, and I am also on the eve of completing another work, totally dif-

\* The reader will pardon my retension of these passages, for the sake of him who wrote them. The poem here mentioned did not deserve what Mr. Shelley said of it. I had not been careful enough in writing it,—had not brooded sufficiently over my thoughts to concentrate them into proper imagination; perhaps was unable to do so. But the subject lay in those sequestered paths of beauty and mythology, which Mr. Shelley was fond of.

† Such is the way in which the most generous of men used to talk to those whom he had obliged.

‡ The taking away of his children by the Court of Chancery.

ferent from any thing you might conjecture that I should write, of a more popular kind; and, if any thing of mine could deserve attention, of higher claims. "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till thou approve the performance."

I send you a little poem to give to Ollier for publication, but *without my name*: Peacock will correct the proofs. I wrote it with the idea of offering it to the Examiner, but I find it is too long.\* It was composed last year at Este: two of the characters you will recognize; the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with respect to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to be written. I have employed a certain familiar style of language to express the actual way in which people talk with each other, whom education and a certain refinement of sentiment have placed above the use of vulgar idioms. I use the word *vulgar* in its most extensive sense; the vulgarity of rank and fashion is as gross in its way, as that of poverty, and its cant terms equally expressive of base conceptions, and therefore equally unfit for poetry. Not that the familiar style is to be admitted in the treatment of a subject wholly ideal, or in that part of any subject which relates to common life, where the passion, exceeding a certain limit, touches the boundaries of that which is ideal. Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor, borrowed from objects alike remote or near, *and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness*.† But what am I about? if my grandmother sucks eggs, was it I who taught her?

If *you* would really correct the proof, I need not trouble Peacock, who, I suppose, has enough. Can you take it as a compliment that I prefer to trouble you?

I do not particularly wish this poem to be known as mine, but, at all events, I would not put my name to it. I leave you to judge whether it is best to throw it in the fire, or to publish it. So much for self—*self*, that burr

\* "Julian and Maddalo," printed in the Posthumous Poems. Maddalo is Lord Byron; Julian himself.

† Let me admire with the reader (I do not pretend to be under the necessity of calling his attention to it) this most noble image.



that will stick to one. Your kind expressions about my *Eclogue*\* gave me great pleasure; indeed, my great stimulus in writing is to have the approbation of those who feel kindly towards me. The rest is mere duty. I am also delighted to hear that you think of us, and form fancies about us. We cannot yet come home.

\* \* \* \* \*

Most affectionately yours,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

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### LETTER III.

Livorno, September 3d, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

At length has arrived Ollier's parcel, and with it the portrait. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself, and we sate talking with it, and of it, all the evening . . . . . It is a great pleasure to us to possess it, a pleasure in a time of need; coming to us when there are few others. How we wish it were you, and not your picture! How I wish we were with you!

This parcel, you know, and all its letters, are now a year old; some older. There are all kinds of dates, from March to August, 1818, and "your date," to use Shakespeare's expression, "is better in a pie or a pudding, than in your letter." "Virginity," Parolles says,—but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came, too, Lamb's works. I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his "Rosamond Gray!" how much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest part of our nature in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's,—when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite and complete perfection, what should I hope for myself, if I had not higher objects in view than fame?

I have seen too little of Italy and of pictures. Perhaps Peacock has shown you some of my letters to him. But at Rome I was very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage; and though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see! Perhaps I attended

\* "Rosalind and Helen."

more to sculpture than painting,—its forms being more easily intelligible than those of the latter. Yet I saw the famous works of Raphael, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter. Why, I can tell you another time. With respect to Michael Angelo, I dissent, and think with astonishment and indignation on the common notion that he equals, and in some respects exceeds Raphael. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity and loveliness; and the energy for which he has been so much praised, appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality, in comparison with any thing possessed by Raphael; or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel, seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. He has been called the Dante of painting; but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines, which are employed in the few most distasteful passages of the *Inferno*, where shall we find *your* Francesca,—where, the spirit coming over the sea in a boat, like Mars rising from the vapours of the horizon,—where, Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness, and sensibility, and ideal beauty, in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakspeare?

As to Michael Angelo's *Moses*—but you have seen a cast of that in England.——I write these things, Heaven knows why!

I have written something and finished it, different from any thing else, and a new attempt for me; and I mean to dedicate it to you.\* I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night, and it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it. If Ollier is not turned Christian, Jew, or become infected with *the Murrain*, he will publish it. Don't let him be frightened, for it is nothing which by any courtesy of language can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel, in which I beg you will make Ollier enclose what you know would

\* “The Cenci.”

most interest me,—your “Calendar,” (a sweet extract from which I saw in the Examiner,) and the other poems belonging to you; and, for some friends of mine, my Eclogue. This parcel, which must be sent instantly, will reach me by October; but don’t trust letters to it, except just a line or so. When you write, write by the post.

Ever your affectionate,

P. B. S.

My love to Marianne and Bessy, and Thornton too, and Percy, &c. and if you could imagine any way in which I could be useful to them here, tell me. I will inquire about the Italian chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives us.

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#### LETTER IV.

Livorno, Sept. 27th, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We are now on the point of leaving this place for Florence, where we have taken pleasant apartments for six months, which brings us to the 1st of April; the season at which new flowers and new thoughts spring forth upon the earth and in the mind. What is then our destination is yet undecided. I have not yet seen Florence, except as one sees the outside of the streets; but its physiognomy indicates it to be a city, which, though the ghost of a republic, yet possesses most amiable qualities. I wish you could meet us there in the spring, and we would try to muster up a “*lieta brigata*,” which leaving behind them the pestilence of remembered misfortunes, might act over again the pleasures of the interlocutors in Boccaccio. I have been lately reading this most divine writer. He is in the high sense of the word a poet, and his language has the rhythm and harmony of verse. I think him not equal certainly either to Dante or Petrarch, but far superior to Tasso and Ariosto, the children of a later and of a colder day. I consider the three first as the productions of the vigour of the infancy of a new nation, as rivulets from the same spring as that which fed the greatness of the



Republics of Florence and Pisa, and which checked the influence of the German emperors, and from which, through obscurer channels, Raphael and Michael Angelo drew the light and the harmony of their inspiration. When the second-rate poets of Italy wrote, the corrupting blight of tyranny was already hanging on every bud of genius. Energy and simplicity and unity of idea were no more. In vain do we seek, in the fine passages of Ariosto or Tasso, any expression which at all approaches, in this respect, to those of Dante and Petrarch. How much do I admire Boccaccio! What descriptions of nature are there in his little introductions to every new day! It is the morning of life, stripped of that mist of familiarity which makes it obscure to us. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations. His more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly too, which have serious meanings of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist, the opposite of the ready-made and worldly system of morals.

\* \* \* \* \*

It would give me much pleasure to know Mr. Lloyd. When I was in Cumberland, I got Southey to borrow a copy of "Berkeley" from him, and I remember observing some pencil notes in it, probably written by Lloyd, which I thought particularly acute.

Most affectionately your friend,  
P. B. S.

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## LETTER V.

Firenze, Dec. 2, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Yesterday morning Mary brought me a little boy. She suffered but two hours' pain, and is now so well that it seems a wonder that she stays in bed. The babe is also quite well, and has begun to suck. You may imagine this is a great relief and a great comfort to me, amongst all my misfortunes, past, present, and to come.

Since I last wrote to you, some circumstances have occurred, not necessary to explain by letter, which make my pecuniary condition a very difficult one. The physicians absolutely forbid my travelling to England in the winter, but I shall probably pay you a visit in the spring. With what pleasure, among all the other sources of regret and discomfort with which England abounds for me, do I *think* of looking on the original of that kind and earnest face which is now opposite Mary's bed. It will be the only thing which Mary will envy me, or will need to envy me, in that journey; for I shall come alone. Shaking hands with you is worth all the trouble; the rest is clear loss.

I will tell you more about myself and my pursuits, in my next letter.

Kind love to Marianne, Bessy, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled. For we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months.

Good bye, my dear Hunt,  
Your affectionate Friend,  
P. B. S.

I have had no letter from you for a *month*.

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## LETTER VI.

Florence, Dec. 23, 1819.

MY DEAR HUNT,

*Why* don't you write to us? I was preparing to send you something for your "Indicator," but I have been a drone instead of a bee in this business, thinking that perhaps, as you did not acknowledge any of my late enclosures, it would not be welcome to you, whatever I might send.

What a state England is in! But you will never write politics. I don't wonder;—but I wish, then, that you would write a paper in "The Examiner," on the actual state of the country, and what, under all the circumstances of the conflicting passions and interests of men, we are to expect. Not what we ought to expect, or

what, if so and so were to happen, we might expect,—but what, as things are, there is reason to believe will come;—and send it me for my information. Every word a man has to say is valuable to the public now; and thus you will at once gratify your friend, nay, instruct, and either exhilarate him or force him to be resigned,—and awaken the minds of the people.

I have no spirits to write what I do not know whether you will care much about: I know well, that if I were in great misery, poverty; &c., you would think of nothing else but how to amuse and relieve me. You omit me if I am prosperous. \* \* \* \*

I could laugh if I found a joke, in order to put you in good-humour with me after my scolding;—in good-humour enough to write to us. \* \* \* \*

Affectionate love to and from all. This ought not only to be the *Vale* of a letter, but a superscription over the gate of life.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I send you a *sonnet*. I don't expect you to publish it, but you may show it to whom you please.

## LETTER VII.

December, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Two letters, both bearing date Oct. 20, arrive on the same day:—one is always glad of twins.

We hear of a box arrived at Genoa with books and clothes: it must be yours. Meanwhile the babe is wrapped in flannel petticoats, and we get on with him as we can. He is small, healthy, and pretty. Mary is recovering rapidly. Marianne, I hope, is quite recovered.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. They are of the exotic species, and are meant, not for "The Indicator," but "The Examiner." I would send for the former, if you like, some letters on such subjects of art as suggest themselves in Italy. Perhaps I will, at a venture, send you a



specimen of what I mean next post. I enclose you in this a piece for "The Examiner;" or let it share the fate, whatever that fate may be, of the "Mask of Anarchy."

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating "Aminta," though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty.

\* \* \* \* \*

With respect to translation, even *I* will not be seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon, (with which I have lately, and with inexpressible wonder and delight, become acquainted,) are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words. And you know me too well to suspect, that I refrain from the belief that what I would substitute for them would deserve the regret which yours would, if suppressed. I have confidence in my moral sense alone; but that is a kind of originality. I have only translated the Cyclops of Euripides when I could absolutely do nothing else, and the Symposium of Plato, which is the delight and astonishment of all who read it:—I mean, the original, or so much of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself. \* \* \* \* \*

I think I have an accession of strength since my residence in Italy, though the disease itself in the side, whatever it may be, is not subdued. Some day we shall all return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and that they will not have learned to yield in time to the spirit of the age. The great thing to do is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy; to inculcate with fervour both the right of resistance and the duty of forbearance. You know my principles incite me to take all the good I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who am ready to be partially satisfied by all that is practicable. We shall see.\*

\* Mr. Shelley would have been pleased to see the change that took place under the administration of Mr. Canning,—a change, which is here described by anticipation.

Give Bessy a thousand thanks from me for writing out in that pretty neat hand your kind and powerful defence. Ask what she would like best from Italian land? We mean to bring you all something; and Mary and I have been wondering what it shall be. Do you, each of you, choose.

\* \* \* \* \*

Adieu, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately ever,

P. B. S.

### LETTER VIII.

Pisa, August 26th, 1821.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Since I last wrote to you, I have been on a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna. The result of this visit was a determination on his part to come and live at Pisa, and I have taken the finest palace on the Lung'Arno for him. But the material part of my visit consists in a message which he desires me to give you, and which I think ought to add to your determination—for such a one I hope you have formed—of restoring your shattered health and spirits by a migration to these “regions mild of calm and serene air.”

He proposes that you should come and go shares with him and me, in a periodical work, to be conducted here; in which each of the contracting parties should publish all their original compositions, and share the profits. He proposed it to Moore, but for some reason it was never brought to bear. There can be no doubt that the *profits* of any scheme in which you and Lord Byron engage, must, from various yet co-operating reasons, be very great. As to myself, I am, for the present, only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other and effectuate the arrangement; since (to intrust you with a secret which, for your sake, I withhold from Lord Byron,) nothing would induce me to share in the profits, and still less in the borrowed splendour, of such

a partnership.\* You and he, in different manners, would be equal, and would bring, in a different manner, but in the same proportion, equal stocks of reputation and success: do not let my frankness with you, nor my belief that you deserve it more than Lord Byron, have the effect of deterring you from assuming a station in modern literature, which the universal voice of my contemporaries forbids me either to stoop or aspire to. I am, and I desire to be, nothing.

I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey; because there are men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation, in the worldly sense of the word; and I am as jealous for my friend as for myself. I, as you know, have it not: but I suppose that at last I shall make up an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me. I know I need only ask.

I think I have never told you how very much I like your *Amyntas*; it almost reconciles me to *Translations*. In another sense I still demur. You might have written another such poem as the "*Nymphs*," with no great access of effort.† I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something if the feeble and irritable frame which encloses it was willing to obey the spirit. I fan-

\* Mr. Shelley afterwards altered his mind; but he had a reserved intention underneath it, which he would have endeavoured to put in practice, had his friend allowed him.

† In one of Lord Byron's letters, having a quarrel with the memory of Mr. Shelley, and being angry with me for loving it so entirely, his Lordship tells me that I was mistaken if I thought Mr. Shelley entertained a very high opinion of my poetry. I answered, that I had already had the mortification of making that discovery; upon which he expressed his vexation at having told it me. I did not add, that I believed Mr. Shelley's opinion of my poetry to have decreased since his becoming used to his Lordship's libels of his "*friends all round*," and that he had latterly exhibited an uneasy suspicion that his intimacy had had an ill effect upon his kindlier views of things in general. But I must own, that I never looked upon Mr. Shelley's real opinion of my poetry as any thing very great; though his affection for me, and his sympathy with the world I lived in, poetical as well as political, sometimes led him to persuade himself otherwise. I suspect he had a very accurate notion of it; greater than what vulgar critics would think just, but as little as a due appreciation of poetry, properly so called, could admit.



cy that then I should do great things. Before this you will have seen "Adonais." Lord Byron, I suppose from modesty on account of his being mentioned in it, did not say a word of "Adonais," though he was loud in his praise of "Prometheus;" and, what you will not agree with him in, censure of the "Cenci." Certainly, if "Marino Faliero" is a drama, the "Cenci" is not: but that between ourselves. Lord Byron is reformed, as far as gallantry goes, and lives with a beautiful and sentimental Italian lady, who is as much attached to him as may be. I trust greatly to his intercourse with you, for his creed to become as pure as he thinks his conduct is. He has many generous and exalted qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out.

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## MR. KEATS,

### WITH A CRITICISM ON HIS WRITINGS.

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MR. KEATS, when he died, had just completed his four-and-twentieth year. He was under the middle height; and his lower limbs were small in comparison with the upper, but neat and well-turned. His shoulders were very broad for his size: he had a face, in which energy and sensibility remarkably mixed up, an eager power checked and made patient by ill-health. Every feature was at once strongly cut, and delicately alive. If there was any faulty expression, it was in the mouth, which was not without something of a character of pugnacity. The face was rather long than otherwise; the upper lip projected a little over the under; the chin was bold, the cheeks sunken; the eyes mellow and glowing; large, dark and sensitive. At the recital of a noble action, or a beautiful thought, they would suffuse with tears, and his mouth trembled. In this, there was ill-health as well as imagination, for he did not like these betrayals of emotion; and he had great personal as well as moral courage. His hair, of a brown colour, was fine, and hung in natural ringlets. The head was a puzzle for the phrenologists, being remarkably small in the skull; a singularity which he had in common with Lord Byron and Mr. Shelley, none of whose hats I could get on. Mr. Keats was sensible of the disproportion above noticed, between his upper and lower extremities; and he would look at his hand, which was faded, and swollen in the veins, and say it was the hand of a man of fifty. He was a seven month's child:

his mother, who was a lively woman, passionately fond of amusement, is supposed to have hastened her death by too great an inattention to hours and seasons. Perhaps she hastened that of her son.

Mr. Keats's origin was of the humblest description; he was born October 29, 1796, at a livery-stables in Moorfields, of which his grandfather was the proprietor. I am very incurious, and did not know this till the other day. He never spoke of it, perhaps out of a personal soreness which the world had exasperated. After receiving the rudiments of a classical education at Mr. Clarke's school at Enfield, he was bound apprentice to Mr. Hammond, a surgeon, in Church-street, Edmonton; and his enemies having made a jest even of this, he did not like to be reminded of it; at once disdaining them for their meanness, and himself for being sick enough to be moved by them. Mr. Clarke, junior, his schoolmaster's son, a reader of genuine discernment, had encouraged with great warmth the genius that he saw in the young poet; and it was to Mr. Clarke I was indebted for my acquaintance with him. I shall never forget the impression made upon me by the exuberant specimens of genuine though young poetry that were laid before me, and the promise of which was seconded by the fine fervid countenance of the writer. We became intimate on the spot, and I found the young poet's heart as warm as his imagination. We read and walked together, and used to write verses of an evening upon a given subject. No imaginative pleasure was left unnoticed by us, or unenjoyed; from the recollection of the bards and patriots of old, to the luxury of a summer rain at our window, or the clicking of the coal in winter-time. Not long afterwards, having the pleasure of entertaining at dinner Mr. Godwin, Mr. Hazlitt, and Mr. Basil Montague, I showed them the verses of my young friend, and they were pronounced to be as extraordinary as I thought them. One of them was that noble sonnet on first reading Chapman's Homer, which terminates with so energetic a calmness, and which completely announced the new poet taking possession. As Mr. Keats's first juvenile volume is not much known, I will repeat the sonnet here, as a remarkable instance of a vein prematurely masculine.



## ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
 Round many western islands have I been,  
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold;  
 Oft of one wide expanse had I been told,  
 That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;  
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene,  
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold.  
*Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,  
 When a new planet swims into his ken,  
 Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes  
 He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men  
 Look'd at each other with a wild surmise,  
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.*

Modern criticism has made the public well acquainted with the merits of Chapman. The retainers of some schools of poetry may not see very far into his old oracular style; but the poets themselves (the true test of poetical merit) have always felt the impression. Waller professed that he could never read him without a movement of transport: and Pope in the preface to his translation, says that he was animated by a daring fiery spirit, something like what we may conceive of Homer himself "before he arrived at years of discretion." Chapman certainly stands upon no ceremony. He blows as rough a blast as Achilles could have desired to hear, very different from the soft music of a parade. "The whales exult" under his Neptune, playing unwieldy gambols; and his Ulysses issues out of the shipwreck, "soaked to the very heart;" tasting of sea-weeds and salt-water, in a style that does not at all mince the matter, or consult the proprieties of Brighton. Mr. Keats's epithets of "loud and bold," showed that he understood him thoroughly. The men of Cortez staring at each other, and the eagle eyes of their leader looking out upon the Pacific, have been thought too violent a picture for the dignity of the occasion; but it is a case that requires the exception. Cortez's "eagle eyes" are a piece of historical painting, as the reader may see by Titian's portrait of him. The last line,

"Silent—upon a peak in Darien,"

makes the mountain a part of the spectacle, and supports the emotion of the rest of the sonnet upon a basis of gigantic tranquillity.

The volume containing this sonnet was published in 1817, when the author was in his twenty-first year. The poem with which it begins, was suggested to him by a delightful summer-day, as he stood beside the gate that leads from the Battery on Hampstead Heath into a field by Caen Wood; and the last poem, the one "On Sleep and Poetry," was occasioned by his sleeping in one of the cottages in the Vale of Health, the first one that fronts the valley, beginning from the same quarter. I mention these things, which now look trivial, because his readers will not think them so twenty years hence. It was in the beautiful lane, running from the road between Hampstead and Highgate to the foot of Highgate Hill, that, meeting me one day, he first gave me the volume. If the admirer of Mr. Keats's poetry does not know the lane in question, he ought to become acquainted with it, both on his author's account and its own. It has been also paced by Mr. Lamb and Mr. Hazlitt, and frequented, like the rest of the beautiful neighbourhood, by Mr. Coleridge; so that instead of Milfield Lane, which is the name it is known by "on earth," it has sometimes been called Poets' Lane, which is an appellation it richly deserves. It divides the grounds of Lords Mansfield and Southampton, running through trees and sloping meadows, and being rich in the botany for which this part of the neighbourhood of London has always been celebrated. I recommend it, contrary to the interests of my solitude; but the mischief done me by sociality pleases me, as usual, still better.

"A drainless shower  
Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of power;  
'Tis might half slumb'ring on its own right arm."

These are some more of the lines in a book, in which feeble critics thought they saw nothing but feebleness. Here are four more, out of a profusion of mixed youth and beauty:—the writer is speaking, of some engraved portraits, that adorned the room he slept in:—

“Great Alfred’s, too, with anxious, pitying eyes,  
As if he always listen’d to the sighs  
Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko’s, worn  
With horrid suff’rance,—*mightily forlorn.*”

But there were political opinions in the book; and these not according with the opinions of the then government authorities, the writer was found to be a very absurd person, and not to be borne. His youth, and the sincerity natural to youth, to say nothing of personal predilections, which are things that nobody has a right to indulge in but the affectionate followers of office, all told against instead of for him in the eyes of a servile weakness, jealous of independence in others, and (to say the truth) not very capable of discerning the greatest talent. To admire and comment upon the genius that two or three hundred years have applauded, and to discover what will partake of the applause two or three hundred years hence, are processes of a very different description. Accordingly, when Mr. Keats, in 1818, published his next volume, his poetic romance entitled “*Endymion*,” the critical authority, then reigning at the west end, showed it no mercy. What completed the matter was, that his publisher, in a fright, went to the critic to conciliate him; as if the greater and more insolent the opportunity of trampling, the petty tyrant, would not be the happier to seize it. Mr. Gifford gave his visiter very plainly to understand that such would be the case. Such it was; and though the bookseller, who in reality had a better taste than the critic, and very properly felt piqued to support his author, stood by him in the publication of another volume, the sale of both volumes was neutralized in that gratuitous acquiescence with the critics, in which the public have since learnt not to be quite so trusting.

“*Endymion*,” it must be allowed, was not a little calculated to perplex the critics. It was a wilderness of sweets, but it was truly a wilderness; a domain of young, luxuriant, uncompromising poetry, where the “weeds of glorious feature” hampered the petty legs accustomed to the lawns and trodden walks, in vogue for the last hundred years; lawns, as Johnson says, “shaven by the



scythe, and levelled with the roller;" walks, which, being public property, have been re-consecrated, like Kensington Gardens, by the beaules of authority, instead of the Pans and Sylvens. Mr. Wordsworth knew better than the critics, but he did not choose to say any thing. He stood upon equivocal footing himself, his greatest poetical recommendation arising from the most prosaical action of his life, to wit, his acceptance of the office of Distributor of Stamps. Mr. Keats, meeting him one day at Mr. Haydon's—the same day when Lamb said that good thing about Voltaire,\*—our young poet was induced to repeat to the older one the Hymn to Pan out of "Endymion:" upon which Mr. Wordsworth said it was a "very pretty piece of Paganism." A new poet had come up, who

Had sight of Proteus coming from the sea ;"

and certainly "the world was not too much with him." But this, which is a thing desired by Lake Poets in their abstractions, is a presumption in the particular, and not to be countenanced. "Such sights as youthful poets dream" must cease, when their predecessors grow old; when they get jealous as fading beauties, and have little annuities for behaving themselves.

The great fault of "Endymion," next to its unpruned luxuriance, (or before it, rather, for it was not a fault on the right side,) was the wilfulness of its rhymes. The author had a just contempt for the monotonous termination of every-day couplets; he broke up his lines in order to distribute the rhyme properly; but going only upon the ground of his contempt, and not having yet settled with himself any principle of versification, the very exuberance of his ideas led him to make use of the first rhymes that offered; so that, by a new meeting of extremes, the effect was as artificial, and much more obtrusive than the one under the old system. Dryden modestly confessed, that a rhyme had often helped him to a thought. Mr. Keats, in the tyranny of his wealth,

\* See the Memoir of Mr. Lamb.

forced his rhymes to help him, whether they would or not; and they obeyed him, in the most singular manner, with equal promptitude and ungainness. "Endymion," too, was not without its faults of weakness, as well as of power. Mr. Keat's natural tendency to pleasure, as a poet, sometimes degenerated, by reason of his ill health, into a poetical effeminacy. There are symptoms of it here and there in all his productions, not excepting the the gigantic grandeur of *Hyperion*. His lovers grow "faint" with the sight of their mistresses; and Apollo, when he is superseding his divine predecessor, and undergoing his transformation into a *Divus Major*, suffers a little too exquisitely among his lilies. But Mr. Keats was aware of this contradiction to the real energy of his nature, and prepared to get rid of it. What is more, he said as much in the Preface to "Endymion," and in a manner calculated to conciliate all critics who were worth touching his volume; but not such were those, from whom the public were to receive their notions of him. Let the reader see it, and wish, if he has hitherto read nothing but criticism upon him, that he had seen it before.

"Knowing," says Mr. Keats, "within myself the manner in which this poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public.

"What manner I mean will be quite clear to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt rather than a deed accomplished. The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as to warrant their passing the press; nor should they, if I thought a year's castigation would do them any good; it will not; the foundations are too sandy. It is just that this youngster should die away: a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting, and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

"This may be speaking too presumptuously, and may deserve a punishment: but no feeling man will be forward to inflict it: he will leave me alone, with the conviction that there is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object. This is not written with the least atom

of purpose to forestall criticisms of course, but from the desire I have to conciliate men who are competent to look, and who do look with a zealous eye, to the honour of English literature.

“The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of man is healthy; but there is a space between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted: thence proceed mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters which those men I speak of must necessarily taste in going over the following pages.

“I hope I have not in too late a day touched the beautiful mythology of Greece, and dulled its brightness: for I wish to try it once more before I bid it farewell.

“Teignmouth, April 10, 1818.”

An organized system of abuse had come up at this period, of a nature with which it was thought no department of literature had hitherto been polluted. The mistake was natural, after a long interval of decorum; but similar abuses have always taken place, when society was not better occupied, or when jealousy and party spleen paid an adversary the compliment of thinking itself sufficiently provoked. A shelf full of scandal might be collected against Dryden and Pope. “The life of a wit,” said Steele, “is a warfare upon earth;” and he had good reason to know it. There was a man of the name of Baker, who made it his business to assail him with criticisms and personalities. The wits themselves too often assailed one another, and in a manner worthy of their calumniators, of which there is humiliating evidence in the lives of Addison and Swift. Even Shakspeare was not without his libeller. Somebody in his time accused him, in common with his fellow play-wrights, of irreligion,—nay, of personal arrogance, and of taking himself for the only “Shake-scene” of the theatre. The new taste in calumny, however, surpassed all the other, by its avowed contempt for truth and decency. It seemed to think, that by an excess of impudence it would confound objection, and even bully itself out of the last lingerings of conscience; and the public, who were mean enough to enjoy what they condemned, enabled the plot to suc-



ceed. The lowest and falsest personalities were a trifle. Privacies were invaded, in a way to make the stoutest hearts tremble for the gentlest and most pitiable; and with an instinct common to the despicable, every delicacy was taken advantage of, that could secure impunity to offence. Even cowardice itself was avowed as a thing profitable. In short, never before was seen such a conspiracy between a reckless love of importance, cold calculation, and party and private resentment. Not being tied down by hard logic or Calvinism, the Scotch, it was said, were resolved to show how difficult it was for them to understand any other principle. Having no throats to cut as Jacobites or Puritans, they must run a muck as Drawcansirs in literature. Not being able to be Reevers of Westburn Flat, they were to plunder people of their characters, and warm the chill poverty of their imaginations at the blushes and distresses of private life.”† Unfortunately, some of the knaves were not destitute of talent: the younger were tools of older ones, who kept out of sight.

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Sir Walter Scott calls this, I believe, a re-action in favour of legitimate ideas. Legitimate ideas are obliged to him for the compliment, and are very much his humble servants: but I doubt whether the Government of 1828 will agree with him, as the Pittites did; and a present Government is a great thing, as the Reviewers have found out. Your absent deity is nothing to your *præ-sens divus*.

The contrivers of this system of calumny thought that it suited their views, trading, political, and personal, to attack the writer of the present work. They did so, and his friends with him, Mr. Keats among the number. Had the hostility been fair, I was a fair object of attack, having not only taken a warm part in politics, but in a very thoughtless and immature spirit attacked people critically, Sir Walter among them. But then I did it openly: my books were not published without a name; and word was always left at the Examiner office, where I was to be found, in case explanation was demanded of any thing I

† I confess that one Burns or one Thomson is enough to sweeten all Scotland in my imagination; which is saying a good deal, after what Edinburgh has done for it.

wrote in the paper. I therefore treated these anonymous assailants with indifference in the first instance, and certainly should not have noticed them at all, had not another person chosen to call upon them in my name. Circumstances then induced me to make a more peremptory call: it was not answered; and the two parties retreated, they into their meanness, and I into my contempt. I have since regretted, on Mr. Keats's account, that I did not take a more active part. The scorn which the public and they would feel for one another, before long, was evident enough; but, in the mean time, an injury, in every point of view, was done to a young and sensitive nature, to which I ought to have been more alive. The truth was, I never thought about it; nor I believe, did he, with a view to my taking any farther notice. I was in the habit, though a public man, of living in a world of abstractions of my own, and I regarded him as a nature still more abstracted, and sure of unsought renown. Though a politician, (such as I was,) I had scarcely a political work in my library. Spensers and Arabian Tales filled up the shelves, as they do now; and Spenser himself was not a remoter spirit in my eyes, from all the common-places of life, than my new friend. Our whole talk was made up of idealisms. In the streets we were in the thick of the old woods. I little suspected at that time, as I did afterward, that the hunters had struck him; that a delicate organization, which already anticipated a premature death, made him feel his ambition thwarted by these fellows; and that the very impatience of being impatient was resented by him, and preyed on his mind. Had he said but a word to me on the subject, I would have kept no measures with them. There were delicacies on other subjects, which I had leave to merge in greater ones, had I chosen it; and, in a case like this, it should have been done.

In every thing but this reserve, which was encouraged by my own incuriousness, (for I have no reserve myself with those whom I love,)—in every other respect but this, Mr. Keats and I were friends of the old stamp, between whom there was no such thing as obligation, except the pleasure of it. He enjoyed the usual privilege of greatness with all whom he knew, rendering it de-

lightful to be obliged by him, and an equal, but not a greater delight, to oblige. It was a pleasure to his friends to have him in their houses, and he did not grudge it. When "Endymion" was published, he was living at Hampstead with his friend Mr. Charles Brown, who attended him most affectionately through a severe illness, and with whom, to their great mutual enjoyment, he had taken a journey into Scotland. The lakes and mountains of the North delighted him exceedingly. He beheld them with an epic eye. Afterwards, he went into the South, and luxuriated in the Isle of Wight. On Mr. Brown's leaving England a second time, to visit the same quarter, Mr. Keats, who was too ill to accompany him, came to reside with me, when his last and best volume of poems appeared, containing *Lamia*, *Isabella*, the *Eve of St. Agnes*, and the noble fragment of *Hyperion*. I remember Charles Lamb's delight and admiration on reading this work; how pleased he was with the designation of Mercury as "the star of Lethe" (rising, as it were, and glittering, as he came upon that pale region;) with the fine daring anticipation in that passage of the second poem,—

"So the two brothers and *their murdered man*  
Rode past fair Florence ;"

and with the description, at once delicate and gorgeous, of Agnes praying beneath the painted window. This last (which should be called, *par excellence*, the Prayer at the Painted Window) has been often quoted; but for the benefit of those who are not yet acquainted with the the author's genius, farther than by means of these pages, I cannot resist repeating it. It throws a light upon one's book.

"A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;  
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.



“ Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
 And threw warm gules on Madeline’s fair breast,  
 As down she knelt for heaven’s grace and boon ;  
 Rose bloom fell on her hands, together press’d,  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :  
 She seem’d a splendid angel, newly dress’d,  
 Save wings, for heaven.”

The whole volume is worthy of this passage. Mr. Keats is no half-painter, who has only distinct ideas occasionally, and fills up the rest with common-places. He feels all as he goes. In his best pieces, every bit is precious; and he knew it, and laid it on as carefully as Titian or Giorgione. Take a few more samples.

#### LOVERS.

“ Parting they seem’d to tread upon the air,  
 Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart,  
 Only to meet again more close, and share  
 The inward fragrance of each other’s heart.”

#### BEEES.

“ Bees, the little almsmen of spring bowers.”

#### A DELICATE SUPPER.

“ And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep  
 In blanch’d linen, smooth and lavender’d,  
 While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd ;  
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon ;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr’d  
 From Fez ; and spiced dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedar’d Lebanon.”

These are stanzas, for which Persian kings would fill a poet’s mouth with gold. I remember Mr. Keats reading these lines to me with great relish and particularity, conscious of what he had set forth. The melody is as sweet as the subject, especially at

“ Lucent syrops tinct with cinnamon,”

and the conclusion. Mr. Wordsworth would say that the vowels were not varied enough; but Mr. Keats knew

where his vowels were *not* to be varied. On the occasion above alluded to, Mr. Wordsworth found fault with the repetition of the concluding sound of the participles in Shakspeare's line about bees.

The *singing* masons *building* roofs of gold.

This, he said, was a line which Milton would never have written. Mr. Keats thought, on the other hand, that the repetition was in harmony with the continued note of the singers, and that Shakspeare's negligence (if negligence it was) had instinctively felt the thing in the best manner. The assertion about Milton startles one, considering the tendency of that great poet to subject his nature to art; yet I have dipped, while writing this, into "Paradise Lost," and at the second chance have lit on the following:

The gray  
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon,  
But opposite, *in levelled west, was set*  
His mirror, with full force borrowing her light.

The repetition of the *e* in the fourth line is an extreme case in point, being monotonous to express one-ness and evenness. Milton would have relished the supper which his young successor, like a page for him, has set forth. It was Mr. Keats who observed to me, that Milton, in various parts of his writings, has shown himself a bit of an epicure, and loves to talk of good eating. That he was choice in his food, and set store by a good cook, there is curious evidence to be found in the proving of his Will; by which it appears, that dining one day "in the kitchen," he complimented Mrs. Milton, by the appropriate title of "Betty," on the dish she had set before him; adding, as if he could not pay her too well for it, "Thou knowest I have left thee all." Henceforth let a kitchen be illustrious, should a gentleman choose to take a cutlet in it. But houses and their customs were different in those days.

#### CALAMITIES FOLLOWING CALAMITIES.

There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun;

As if its vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, *and the sullen rear*  
*Was with its stored thunder labouring up.*

This is out of the fragment of "Hyperion," which is truly like the fragment of a former world. There is a voice in it grander than any that has been uttered in these times, except in some of Mr. Wordsworth's sonnets; though the author, in a noble verse, has regretted its inadequacy to his subject.

Oh how frail

To that large utterance of the early Gods!

#### OAKS CHARMED BY THE STARS.

As when upon a tranced summer night,  
Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off;  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave;  
So came these words and went.

#### A GOD RECLINING IN SORROW.

And all along a dismal rack of clouds,  
Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
He stretch'd himself, in grief and radiance faint.

#### THE ELDER GODS DETHRONED.

Mnemosyne was straying in the world;  
Far from her throne had Phœbe wandered;  
And many else were free to roam abroad  
But for the main here found they covert drear,  
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways; *like a dismal cirque*  
*Of Druid stones upon a forlorn moor,*  
*When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,*  
*In dull November, and their chancel vault,*  
*The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.*

But I shall fill my book with quotations. A criticism, entering more into the nature of the author's genius, may be found by any one who wishes to see it, in the "Indicator." One or two passages, however, in the fine lyrical pieces in this volume, must be noticed. One is on a sculptured vase, representing a procession with mu-



sic; upon which the authors says, with an intensity of sentiment, at once original in the idea, and going home, like an old thought, to the heart—

“Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear’d,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou can’st not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss;  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair.

Upon this beautiful passage, a sapient critic observed, that he should like to know how there could be music unheard. The reader will be more surprised to know who it was that asked what was the meaning, in the following ode, of a beaker, “*full of the warm south.*” As Mr. Keats’s poems are in few hands, compared to what they will be, I will not apologize for transcribing the whole of a beautiful poem, which in a very touching manner falls in with the poetical biography of the author, having been composed by him while he lay sleepless and suffering under the illness which he felt to be mortal.

#### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:  
’Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thine happiness,—  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
In most melodious plot  
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.  
Oh for a draught of vintage that hath been  
Cool’d a long age in the deep-delved earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country green;  
Dance, and Provencal song, and sunburnt mirth!  
Oh for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth!  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim;—

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret,  
   Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;  
   Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last, grey hairs ;  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;  
   Where still to think is to be full of sorrow  
   And leaden-eyed despairs ;  
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
   Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,  
   Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
   Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :  
   Already with thee ! tender is the night,  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
   Cluster'd around by all her starry fays ;  
   But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
   Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
   Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs  
 But in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet,  
   Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
   The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine,  
   Fast fading violets covered up in leaves ;  
   And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose full of dewy wine,  
   The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time  
   I have been half in love with easeful Death ;  
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
   To take into the air my quiet breath,  
   Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
   While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
   In such an ecstasy !  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
   To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird !  
   No hungry generations tread thee down ;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
   In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
   Perhaps the self-same song that found path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
   She stood in tears amid the alien corn:  
   The same that ofttime hath  
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
   Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.—

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell  
To toll me back from thee to my sole self.  
Adieu ! the Fancy cannot cheat so well  
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf !  
Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades  
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
Up the hill side ; and now 'tis buried deep  
In the next valley glades.  
Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?  
Fled is that music :—Do I wake or sleep ?

It was Lord Byron, at that time living in Italy, drinking its wine, and basking in its sunshine, who asked me what was the meaning of a beaker "full of the warm south." It was not the word beaker that puzzled him. College had made him intimate enough with that. But the sort of poetry in which he excelled, was not accustomed to these poetical concentrations. At the moment also, he was willing to find fault, and did not wish to discern an excellence different from his own. When I told him, that Mr. Keats admired his "Don Juan," he expressed both surprise and pleasure, and afterwards mentioned him with respect in a canto of it. He could not resist, however, making undue mention of one of the causes that affected his health. A good rhyme about *particle* and *article* was not to be given up. I told him he was mistaken in attributing Mr. Keats's death to the critics, though they had perhaps hastened, and certainly embittered it; and he promised to alter the passage: but a joke and a rhyme together! Those Italian shrugs of the shoulders, which I hope will never be imported among us, are at once a lamentation and an excuse for every thing; and I cannot help using one here. At all events, I have kept my promise, to make the erratum myself in case it did not appear.

Mr. Keats had felt that his disease was mortal for two or three years before he died. He had a constitutional tendency to consumption; a close attendance to the death-bed of a beloved brother, when he ought to have been nursing himself in bed, gave it a blow which he felt for months; and meanwhile the rascally critics came up, and roused an indignation in him, both against them and himself, which he could ill afford to endure. All this trouble was secretly aggravated by a very tender circum-



stance, which I can but allude to thus publicly, and which naturally subjected one of the warmest hearts and imaginations that ever existed, to all the pangs, that doubt, succeeded by delight, and delight, succeeded by hopelessness in this world, could inflict. Seeing him once change countenance in a manner more alarming than usual, as he stood silently eyeing the country out of window, I pressed him to let me know how he felt, in order that he might enable me to do what I could for him: upon which he said, that his feelings were almost more than he could bear, and that he feared for his senses. I proposed that we should take a coach, and ride about the country together, to vary, if possible, the immediate impression, which was sometimes all that was formidable, and would come to nothing. He acquiesced, and was restored to himself. It was nevertheless on the same day, sitting on the bench in Well Walk, at Hampstead, nearest the heath,\* that he told me, with unaccustomed tears in his eyes, that "his heart was breaking." A doubt, however, was upon him at the time, which he afterwards had reason to know was groundless; and during his residence at the last house that he occupied before he went abroad, he was at times more than tranquil. At length, he was persuaded by his friends to try the milder climate of Italy; and he thought it better for others as well as himself that he should go. He was accompanied by Mr. Severn, a young artist of great promise, who has since been well known as the principal English student at Rome, and who possessed all that could recommend him for a companion,—old acquaintanceship, great animal spirits, active tenderness, and a mind capable of appreciating that of the poet. They went first to Naples, and afterwards to Rome; where, on the 27th of December, 1820, our author died in the arms of his friend, completely worn out, and longing for the release. He suffered so much in his lingering, that he used to watch the countenance of the physician for the favourable and fatal sentence, and express his regret when he found it delayed. Yet no impatience escaped him. He was manly and gentle to the last, and grateful for all

\* The one against the wall.

services. A little before he died, he said that he "felt the daisies growing over him." But he made a still more touching remark respecting his epitaph. "If any," he said, "were put over him, he wished it to consist of nothing but these words: 'Here lies one, whose name was writ in water:—'"—so little did he think of the more than promise he had given;—of the fine and lasting things he had added to the stock of poetry. The physicians expressed their astonishment that he had held out so long, the lungs turning out, on inspection, to have been almost obliterated. They said he must have lived upon the mere strength of the spirit within him. He was interred in the English burying-ground at Rome, near the monument of Caius Cestius, where his friend and poetical mourner, Mr. Shelley, was shortly to join him.

So much for the mortal life of as true a man of genius as these latter times have seen; one of those who are too genuine and too original to be properly appreciated at first, but whose time for applause will infallibly arrive with the many, and has already begun in all poetical quarters. I venture to prophesy, as I have done elsewhere, that Mr. Keats will be known hereafter in English literature, emphatically, as *the Young Poet*; and that his volumes will be the sure companions, in field and grove, of all those who know what a luxury it is to hasten, with a favourite volume against one's heart, out of the strife of common-places into the haven of solitude and imagination.

MR. KEATS

TO

MR. LEIGH HUNT.

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Margate, May 10th.

MY DEAR HUNT,

The little gentleman that sometimes lurks in a gossip's bowl, ought to have come in the very likeness of a *roasted* crab, and choked me outright for not having answered your letter ere this: however, you must not suppose that I was in town to receive it: no, it followed me to the Isle of Wight, and I got it just as I was going to pack up for Margate, for reasons which you anon shall hear. On arriving at this treeless affair, I wrote to my brother George to request C. C. C. to do the thing you wot of respecting Rimini; and George tells me he has undertaken it with great pleasure; so I hope there has been an understanding between you for many proofs: C. C. C. is well acquainted with Bensley. Now why did you not send the key of your cupboard, which, I know, was full of papers? We would have locked them all in a trunk, together with those you told me to destroy, which indeed I did not do, for fear of demolishing receipts, there not being a more unpleasant thing in the world (saving a thousand and one others) than to pay a bill twice. Mind you, old W——'s a "very varmint," sharded in covetousness:—and now I am upon a horrid subject—what a



horrid one you were upon last Sunday, and well you handled it.

\* \* \* \* \*

What is to be the end of this? I must mention Hazlitt's Southey. O that he had left out the grey hairs; or that they had been in any other newspaper not concluding with such a thunderclap! That sentence about making a page of the feeling of a whole life, appears to me like a whale's back in the sea of prose. I ought to have said a word on Shakspeare's Christianity. There are two (passages) which I have not looked over with you, touching the thing: the one for, the other against: that in favour is in Measure for Measure, Act. ii. Scene 2.

*Isab.* "Alas, alas!

Why all the souls that were, were forfeit once;  
And he that might the 'vantange best have took,  
Found out the remedy."

That against is in "Twelfth Night," Act. iii. Scene 2.

*Maria.* "For there is no Christian that means to be saved by believing rightly, can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness."

Before I come to the Nymphs, I must get through all disagreeables. I went to the Isle of Wight, thought so much about poetry, so long together, that I could not get to sleep at night; and, moreover, I know not how it is, I could not get wholesome food. By this means, in a week or so, I became not over capable in my upper stories, and set off pell-mell for Margate, at least a hundred and fifty miles, because, forsooth, I fancied I should like my old lodgings here, and could contrive to do without trees. Another thing, I was too much in solitude, and consequently was obliged to be in continual burning of thought, as an only resource. However, Tom is with me at present, and we are very comfortable. We intend, though, to get among some trees. How have you got on among them? How are the Nymphs? I suppose they have led you a fine dance. Where are you now?—in Judea, Cappadocia, or the parts of Lydia about Cyrene?

\*            \*            \*            \*

I wager you have given several new turns to the old saying, "Now the maid was fair and pleasant to look on," as well as made a little variation in "Once upon a time." Perhaps, too, you have rather varied, "Here endeth the first lesson." \*            \*            \*            \*            \*

I have asked myself so often why I should be a poet more than other men, seeing how great a thing it is,—how great things are to be gained by it, what a thing to be in the mouth of Fame,—that at last the idea has grown so monstrously beyond my seeming power of attainment, that the other day I nearly consented with myself to drop into a Phaeton. Yet 'tis a disgrace to fail, even in a huge attempt; and at this moment I drive the thought from me. I began my poem about a fortnight since, and have done some every day, except travelling ones. Perhaps I may have done a good deal for the time, but it appears such a pin's point to me, that I will not copy any out. When I consider that so many of these pin-points go to form a bodkin-point, [God send I end not my life with a bare bodkin, in its modern sense!] and that it requires a thousand bodkins to make a spear bright enough to throw any light to posterity, I see nothing but continual up-hill journeying. Now is there any thing more unpleasant (it may come among the thousand and one) than to be so journeying and to miss the goal at last? But I intend to whistle all these cogitations into the sea, where I hope they will breed storms violent enough to block up all exit from Russia. Does Shelley go on telling strange stories of the death of kings?\* Tell him, there

\* Mr. Shelley was fond of quoting the passage here alluded to in Shakspeare, and of applying it in the most unexpected manner.

"For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,  
And tell strange stories of the deaths of kings."

Going with me to town once in the Hampstead stage, in which our only companion was an old lady, who sat silent and stiff after the English fashion, he startled her into a look of the most ludicrous astonishment by saying abruptly; "Hunt,

'For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground,' " &c.

The old lady looked on the coach-floor, as if she expected to see us take our seats accordingly.

are strange stories of the death of poets. Some have died before they were conceived. "How do you make that out, Master Vellum?" Does Mrs. S. cut bread and butter as neatly as ever? Tell her to procure some fatal scissors, and cut the thread of life of all to-be-disappointed poets. Does Mrs. Hunt tear linen as straight as ever? Tell her to tear from the book of life all blank leaves. Remember me to them all; to Miss K. and the little ones all.

Your sincere friend,  
JOHN KEATS, alias JUNKETS.\*

You shall hear where we move.

The reader who has perused the preceding notice of Mr. Keats, will be touched by the melancholy anticipations that follow, and that are made in so good-humoured a manner.

\* An appellation that was given him in play upon his name, and in allusion to his friends of Fairy-land.



MR. DUBOIS.—MR. CAMPBELL.—MR.  
THEODORE HOOK.—MR. MATHEWS.—  
MESSRS. JAMES & HORACE SMITH.

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I FORGET how I became acquainted with Mr. Hill, proprietor of the monthly Mirror; but at his house at Sydenham I used to meet his editor, Mr. Dubois; Mr. Campbell, who was his neighbour; and the two Smiths, authors of "The Rejected Addresses." Once or twice I saw also Mr. Theodore Hook, and Mr. Mathews the comedian. Our host (and I thought him no older the other day than he was then) was a jovial bachelor, plump and rosy as an abbot; and no abbot could have presided over a more festive Sunday. The wine flowed merrily and long; the discourse kept pace with it; and next morning, in returning to town, we felt ourselves very thirsty. A pump by the road side, with a plash round it, was a bewitching sight.

Dubois was one of those wits, who, like the celebrated Eachard, have no faculty of gravity. His handsome hawk's-eyes looked blank at a speculation; but set a joke or a piece of raillery in motion, and they sparkled with wit and malice. Nothing could be more trite or common-place than his serious observations. Acquiescences they should rather have been called; for he seldom ventured upon a gravity, but in echo of another's remark. If he did, it was in defence of orthodoxy; of which he was a great advocate. But his quips and cranks were infinite. He was also an excellent scholar. He, Dr.

King, and Eachard, would have made a capital trio over a table, for scholarship, mirth, drinking, and religion. He was intimate with Sir Philip Francis, and gave the public a new edition of the Horace of Sir Philip's father. The literary world knew him well also as the writer of a popular novel in the genuine Fielding manner, entitled *Old Nick*. Mr. Dubois held his editorship of the Monthly Mirror very cheap. He amused himself with writing notes on Athenæus, and was a lively critic on the theatres; but half the jokes in his Magazine were written for his friends, and must have mystified the uninitiated. His notices to correspondents were often made up of this bye-play; and made his friends laugh, in proportion to their obscurity to every one else. When I use the past tense in writing these sketches, it is because I speak of past times. Mr. Dubois is living still, to scatter his anonymous pleasantries; and if my eyes did not deceive me the other day, when I met him, he affords another instance of the juvenility of the social. If the bottle does not stand with him, time does: but then, I remember, he was festive in good taste; no gourmand; and had a strong head withal. I do not know whether such men ever last as long as the unsophisticate; but they certainly last as long, and look a great deal younger, than the carking and severe. Long may my old acquaintance last, to prove the superiority of a lively mixture of the good and ill of this life, over a sulky one; and if the gout must come after all, may he be as learned and pleasant over it, as his friend Lucian.

They who know Mr. Campbell only as the author of "Gertrude of Wyoming," and the "Pleasures of Hope," would not suspect him to be a merry companion, overflowing with humour and anecdote, and any thing but fastidious. These Scotch poets have always something in reserve. It is the only point in which the major part of them resemble their countrymen. The mistaken character which the lady formed of Thomson from his "Seasons," is well known. He let part of the secret out in his "Castle of Indolence;" and the more he let out, the more honour it did to the simplicity and cordiality of the poet's nature, though not always

to the elegance of it. Allan Ramsay knew his friends Gay and Somerville as well in their writings, as he did when he came to be personally acquainted with them; but Allan, who had bustled up from a barber's shop into a bookseller's, was "a cunning shaver;" and nobody would have guessed the author of the "Gentle Shepherd" to be penurious. Let none suppose that any insinuation to that effect is intended against Mr. Campbell. He is one of the few men whom I could at any time walk half a dozen miles through the snow to spend an afternoon with; and I could no more do this with a penurious man, than I could with a sulky one. I know but of one fault he has, besides an extreme cautiousness in his writings; and that one is national, a matter of words, and amply overpaid by a stream of conversation, lively, piquant, and liberal, not the less interesting for occasionally betraying an intimacy with pain, and for a high and somewhat strained tone of voice, like a man speaking with suspended breath, and in the habit of subduing his feelings. No man, I should guess, feels more kindly towards his fellow-creatures, or takes less credit for it. When he indulges in doubt and sarcasm, and speaks contemptuously of things in general, he does it, partly, no doubt, out of actual dissatisfaction, but more perhaps than he suspects, out of a fear of being thought weak and sensitive; which is a blind that the best men very commonly practise. Mr. Campbell professes to be hopeless and sarcastic, and takes pains all the while to set up a university.

When I first saw this eminent person, he gave me the idea of a French Virgil. Not that he is like a Frenchman, much less the French translator of Virgil. I found him as handsome, as the Abbé Delille is said to have been ugly. But he seemed to me to embody a Frenchman's ideal notion of the Latin poet; something a little more cut and dry than I had looked for; compact and elegant, critical and acute, with a consciousness of authorship upon him; a taste over-anxious not to commit itself, and refining and diminishing nature as in a drawing-room mirror. This fancy was strengthened in the course of conversation, by his expatiating on the greatness of Racine. I think he had a volume of the French Tragedian



in his hand. His skull was sharply cut and fine; with plenty, according to the phrenologists, both of the reflective and amative organs: and his poetry will bear them out. For a lettered solitude, and a bridal properly got up, both according to law and luxury, commend us to the lovely "Gertrude of Wyoming." His face and person were rather on a small scale; his features regular; his eye lively and penetrating; and when he spoke, dimples played about his mouth, which nevertheless had something restrained and close in it. Some gentle puritan seemed to have crossed the breed, and to have left a stamp on his face, such as we often see in the female Scotch face rather than the male. But he appeared not at all grateful for this; and when his critiques and his Virgilianism were over, very unlike a puritan he talked! He seemed to spite his restrictions; and out of the natural largeness of his sympathy with things high and low, to break at once out of Delille's Virgil into Cotton's, like a boy let loose from school. When I have the pleasure of hearing him now, I forget his Virgilianisms, and think only of the delightful companion, the unaffected philanthropist, and the creator of a beauty worth all the heroines in Racine.

Mr. Campbell has tasted pretty sharply of the good and ill of the present state of society, and for a bookman has beheld strange sights. He witnessed a battle in Germany from the top of a convent (on which battle he has written a noble ode;) and he saw the French cavalry enter a town, wiping their bloody swords on the horses' manes. Not long ago he was in Germany again, I believe to purchase books: for in addition to his classical scholarship, and his other languages, he is a reader of German. The readers there, among whom he is popular, both for his poetry and his love of freedom, crowded about him with affectionate zeal; and they gave him, what he does not dislike, a good dinner. There is one of our writers who has more fame than he; but not one who enjoys a fame equally wide, and without drawback. Like many of the great men in Germany, Schiller, Wieland and others, he has not scrupled to become editor of a magazine; and his name alone has given it among all circles a

recommendation of the greatest value, and such as makes it a grace to write under him.

I remember, one day at Sydenham, Mr. Theodore Hook came in unexpectedly to dinner, and amused us very much with his talent at extempore verse. He was then a youth, tall, dark, and of a good person, with small eyes, and features more round than weak; a face that had character and humour, but no refinement. His extempore verses were really surprising. It is easy enough to extemporize in Italian—one only wonders, how in a language in which every thing conspires to render verse-making easy and it is difficult to avoid rhyming, this talent should be so much cried up—but in English it is another matter. I know but of one other person besides Mr. Hook, who can extemporize in English; and he wants the power, perhaps the confidence to do it in public. Of course, I speak of rhyming. Extempore blank verse, with a little practice, would be found as easy in English, as rhyming is in Italian. In Mr. Hook the faculty was very unequivocal. He could not have been aware of all the visitors, still less of the subject of conversation when he came in, and he talked his full share till called upon; yet he ran his jokes and his verses upon us all in the easiest manner, saying something characteristic of every body, or avoiding it with a pun, and introducing so agreeably a piece of village scandal upon which the party had been rallying Mr. Campbell, that the poet, though not unjealous of his dignity, was perhaps the most pleased of us all. Mr. Hook afterwards sat down to the piano-forte, and enlarging upon this subject, made an extempore parody of a modern opera, introducing sailors and their clap-traps, rustics, &c. and making the poet and his supposed flame the hero and heroine. He parodied music as well as words, giving us the most received cadences and flourishes, and calling to mind (not without some hazard to his filial duties) the common-places of the pastoral songs and duetts of the last half-century; so that if Mr. Dignum, the Damon of Vauxhall, had been present, he would have doubted whether to take it as an affront or a compliment.

I have since been unable to help wishing, perhaps not very wisely, that Mr. Campbell would be a little less

careful and fastidious in what he did for the public; for, after all, an author may reasonably be supposed to do best that which he is most inclined to do. It is our business to be grateful for what a poet sets before us, rather than to be wishing that his peaches were nectarines, or his Falernian Champagne. Mr. Campbell, as an author, is all for refinement and classicality, not however without a great deal of pathos and luxurious fancy. His merry *jongleur*, Mr. Hook, has as little propensity, perhaps, as can be imagined, to any of these niceties: yet I confess, from the mere pleasure of the recollection of the evening I passed with him, I have been unable to repress a wish, as little wise as the other; to wit, that he had stuck to his humours and farces, for which he had real talent, instead of writing politics.

Among the visitors at Sydenham, was Mr. Mathews the comedian. I have had the pleasure of seeing him there more than once, and of witnessing his imitations, which, admirable as they are on the stage, are still more so in a private room. Once and away his wife used to come with him, with her handsome eyes; and charitably make tea for us. The other day I had the pleasure of seeing them at their own table: and I thought that while Time, with unusual courtesy, had spared the sweet countenance of the one, he had given more force and interest to that of the other in the very ploughing of it up. Strong lines have been cut, and the face has stood them well. I have seldom been more surprised than in coming close to Mr. Mathews on that occasion, and in seeing the bust that he has in his Gallery of his friend Mr. Liston. Some of these comic actors, like comic writers, are as unfarceical as can be imagined in their interior. The taste for humour comes to them by the force of contrast. The last time I had seen Mr. Mathews, his face appeared to me insignificant to what it was then. On the former occasion, he looked like an irritable in-door pet: on the latter, he seemed to have been grappling with the world, and to have got vigour by it. His face had looked out upon the Atlantic, and said to the old waves, "Buffet on; I have seen trouble as well as you." The paralytic affection, or whatever it was, that twisted his mouth when young, had formerly appeared to be



master of his face, and given it a character of indecision and alarm. It now seemed a minor thing; a twist in a piece of old oak. And what a bust was Mr. Liston's! The mouth and chin, with the throat under it, hung like an old bag; but the upper part of the head is as fine as possible: there is a speculation, a look-out, and even an elevation of character in it, as unlike the Liston on the stage, as Lear is to King Pippin. One might imagine Laberious to have had such a face.

The reasons why Mr. Mathews's imitations are still better in private than in public are, that he is more at his ease personally, more secure of his audience ("fit though few,") and able to interest them with traits of private character, which could not be introduced on the stage. He gives, for instance, to persons who he thinks will take it rightly, a picture of the manners and conversation of Sir Walter Scott, highly creditable to that celebrated person, and calculated to add regard to admiration. His commonest imitations are not superficial. Something of the mind and character of the individual is always insinuated, often with a dramatic dressing, and plenty of sauce piquante. At Sydenham he used to give us a dialogue among the actors, each of whom found fault with another for some defect or excess of his own,—Kemble objecting to stiffness, Munden to grimace, and so on. His representation of Incledon was extraordinary: his nose seemed actually to become aquiline. It is a pity I cannot put upon paper, as represented by Mr. Mathews, the singular gabblings of that actor, the lax and sailor-like twist of mind, with which every thing hung upon him; and his profane pieties in quoting the Bible; for which, and swearing, he seemed to have an equal reverence. He appeared to be charitable to every body but Mr. Braham. He would be described as saying to his friend Holman, for instance, "My dear George, don't be abusive, George;—don't insult,—don't be indecent, by G—d! You should take the beam out of your own eye,—what the devil is it? you know, in the Bible; something" (the *a* very broad) "about *a* beam, my dear George! and—and—and—*a* mote:—you'll find it *any* part of the Bible; yes, George, my dear boy, the Bible, by G—d;" (and then with real

fervour and reverence) "the Holy Scripture, G—d d—me!" He swore as dreadfully as a devout knight-errant. Braham, whose trumpet blew down his wooden walls, he could not endure. He is represented as saying one day, with a strange mixture of imagination and matter-of-fact, that "he only wished his beloved master, Mr. Jackson, could come down from Heaven, and take the Exeter stage to London, to hear that d—d Jew!" As Mr. Hook made his extempore verses on us, so Mr. Mathews one day gave an extempore imitation of us all round, with the exception of a fierce young critic, who happened to be present, and in whose appearance and manner he pronounced that there was no handle for mimicry. This may have been intended as a politeness towards a comparative stranger, perhaps as a piece of policy; and the laughter was not missed by it. At all events, the critic was both good-humoured and self-satisfied enough to have borne the mimicry; and no harm would have come of it. One morning, after stopping all night, I was getting up to breakfast, when I heard the noise of a little boy having his face washed. Our host was a merry bachelor, and to the rosiness of a priest might, for aught I knew, have added the paternity; but I had never heard of it, and still less expected to find a child in his house. More obvious and obstreperous proofs, however, of the existence of a boy with a dirty face, could not have been met with. You heard the child crying and objecting; then the woman remonstrating; then the cries of the child were snubbed and swallowed up in the hard towel; and at intervals out came his voice bubbling and deploring, and was again swallowed up. At breakfast, the child being pitied, I ventured to speak about it, and was laughing and sympathising in perfect good faith, when Mr. Mathews came in, and I found that the little urchin was he. The same morning he gave us his immortal imitation of old Tate Wilkinson, patentee of the York Theatre. Tate had been a little too merry in his youth, and was very melancholy in old age. He had a wandering mind and a decrepid body; and being manager of a theatre, a husband, and a rat-catcher, he would speak, in his wanderings, "variety of wretchedness." He would inter-

weave, for instance, all at once, the subjects of a new engagement at his theatre, the rats, a veal-pie, Garrick and Mrs. Siddons, and Mrs. Tate and the doctor. I do not pretend to give a specimen: Mr. Mathews alone can do it; but one trait I recollect, descriptive of Tate himself, which will give a good notion of him. On coming into the room, Mr. Mathews assumed the old manager's appearance, and proceeded towards the window, to reconnoitre the state of the weather, which was a matter of great importance to him. His hat was like a hat worn the wrong way, side foremost, looking sadly crinkled and old; his mouth was desponding, his eye staring, and his whole aspect meagre, querulous, and prepared for objection. This miserable object, grunting and hobbling, and helping himself with any thing he can lay hold of as he goes, creeps up to the window; and giving a glance at the clouds, turns round with an ineffable look of despair and acquiescence, ejaculating "*Uh Christ!*"

Of James Smith, a fair, stout, fresh-coloured man with round features, I recollect little, except that he used to read to us trim verses, with rhymes pat as butter. The best of his verses are in the Rejected Addresses; and they are excellent. Isaac Hawkins Browne with his Pipe of Tobacco, and all the rhyming; *jeux-d'esprit* in all the Tracts, are extinguished in the comparison; not excepting the Probationary Odes. Mr. Fitzgerald finds himself bankrupt in *non sequiturs*; Crabbe knoweth not which is which, himself or his parodist; and Lord Byron confessed to me, that the summing up of his philosophy, to wit, that

"Naught is every thing, and every thing is naught,"

was very posing. Mr. Smith would sometimes repeat after dinner, with his brother Horace, an imaginary dialogue, stuffed full of incongruities, that made us roll with laughter. His ordinary verse and prose are too full of the ridicule of city pretensions. To be superior to any thing, it should not always be running in one's head.

His brother Horace was delicious. Lord Byron used to say, that this epithet should be applied only to catables; and that he wondered a friend of his, who was cri-



tical in matters of eating, should use it in any other sense. I know not what the present usage may be in the circles, but classical authority is against his Lordship, from Cicero downwards; and I am content with the modern warrant of another noble wit, the famous Lord Peterborough, who in his fine, open way, said of Fenelon, that he was such a "delicious creature," he was forced to get away from him, "else he would have made him pious!" I grant there is something in the word delicious, which may be said to comprise a reference to every species of pleasant taste. It is at once a quintessence and a miscellany; and a friend, to deserve the epithet, ought to be capable of delighting us as much over our wine and fruit, as on graver occasions. Fenelon himself could do this, with all his piety; or rather he could do it because his piety was of the true sort, and relished of every thing that was sweet and affectionate. The modesty of my friend Horace Smith (which is a manly one, and has no hectic pretensions to what it deprecates) will pardon me this reference to a greater name. He must allow me to add, at some hazard of disturbing him, that a finer nature, except in one instance, I never was acquainted with in man; nor even in that instance, all circumstances considered, have I a right to say that those who knew him as intimately as I did the other person, would not have had the same reasons to love him. The friend I speak of had a very high regard for Mr. Horace Smith, as may be seen by the following verses, the initials in which the reader has now the pleasure of filling up:—

" Wit and sense,  
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might  
Make this dull world a business of delight,  
Are all combined in H. S."

Mr. Horace Smith differed with Mr. Shelley on some points; but on others, which all the world agree to praise highly and to practise very little, he agreed so entirely, and showed so unequivocally that he did agree, that (with the exception of one person (V. N.) too diffident to gain such an honour from his friends) they were the only two men I ever knew, from whom I could receive advice or remonstrance with perfect comfort, because I

could be sure of the unmixed motives and entire absence of self-reflection, with which it would come from them.\* Mr. Shelley said to me once, "I know not what Horace Smith must take me for sometimes: I am afraid he must think me a strange fellow; but is it not odd, that the only truly generous person I ever knew, who had money to be generous with, should be a stock-broker! And he writes poetry too," continued Mr. Shelley, his voice rising in a fervour of astonishment; "he writes poetry and pastoral dramas, and yet knows how to make money, and does make it, and is still generous!" Mr. Shelley had reason to like him. Horace Smith was one of the few men, who, through a cloud of detraction, and through all that difference of conduct from the rest of the world, which naturally excites obloquy, discerned the greatness of my friend's character. Indeed, he became a witness to the very unequivocal proof of it, which I mentioned elsewhere. The mutual esteem was accordingly very great, and arose from circumstances most honourable to both parties. "I believe," said Mr. Shelley on another occasion, "that I have only to say to Horace Smith that I want a hundred pounds or two, and he would send it me without any eye to its being returned; such faith has he that I have something within me beyond what the world supposes, and that I could only ask his money for a good purpose." And he would have sent for it accordingly, if the person for whom it was intended had not said nay. I will now mention the circumstance, which first gave my friend a regard for Mr. Smith. It concerns the person just mentioned, who is a man of letters. It came to Mr. Smith's knowledge, some years ago, that this person was suffering bitterly under a pecuniary trouble. He knew little of him at the time, but had met him occasionally; and he availed himself of this circumstance to write him a letter as full of delicacy and cordiality as it could hold, making it a matter of grace to accept a bank-note of 100*l.* which he enclosed. I speak on the best authority, that of the obliged person himself; who adds

\* With all his vagaries I must add Mr. Hazlit, who is quite capable, when he chooses, of giving genuine advice, and making you sensible of his disinterestedness. Mr. Lamb could do it too; but for interference of any sort he has an abhorrence.

that he not only did accept the money, but felt as light and happy under the obligation, as he has felt miserable under the very report of being obliged to some; and he says, that nothing could induce him to withhold his name, but a reason which the generous would excuse. From his friends in private he has no reason to conceal it, and he does not, as I can testify: and there is one thing more which he says he will conceal from nobody; which is, that subsequently to that obligation, he incurred others from the friend in question, which not only taxed his friend's kindness, but his patience; and that notwithstanding these trials, the other was still so generous to discern in him what was well-intentioned from what was badly managed, and has retained to this hour so kind an opinion of him, that he never makes a step in better management (for his slow progress in which he has had more excuses than most people, in sickness, temperament, and a total want of education for it,) but he is accompanied, and assisted, with the hope of pleasing him before long, with the sight of the fruits of it. Such friends, and such only, (including those whose wish to act like them is as unequivocal as their inability,) are the friends that do a man all the good that can be done him, because they are not only generous to his virtues, but as humane to his faults as other people are to their own. For my part, I scarcely ever write a page which the public thinks worth reading, and which they like because it serves to keep them in heart with nature and mankind, but Horace Smith is one of those friends whom I fancy myself talking with, and whom I wish to gratify. It is such as he that a humanist would have the world become, and that furnish a proof that the wish is not founded in impossibility. Swift said, that if the world contained a dozen Arbuthnots, he would burn his books. I am convinced, that the world contains hundreds of Arbuthnots, if education would but do their natures justice. Give me the education of a community, in which mutual help instead of selfish rivalry was the principle inculcated, and riches regarded not as the end but the means, and I would undertake, not upon the strength of my own ability, but on the sole ground of the absence of what is at present taught us, to fill the place *full* of Arbuthnots and Ho-



race Smiths; not indeed, as to wit and talent, but with all their geniality and sense and open-heartedness; with the same reasonableness of gain, and readiness of enjoyment.

When Mr. Horace Smith sees this account of himself, he will think that too much has been said of his generosity: and he would be right, if society were constituted otherwise than it is. Actions of this kind are not so common in trading communities as in others; because people learn to taste the value of every sixpence that passes through their hands. And for the same reason they are more extravagantly admired; sometimes with a fatuity of astonishment, sometimes with an envy that seeks relief in sarcasm. All these excesses of homage are painful to a man, who would fain have every body as natural and generous as himself; but the just tribute must not be withheld on that account; otherwise there would be still fewer counteractions to the selfishness so abundantly taught us. At the period in question, I have said that Mr. Smith was a stock-broker. He left business with a fortune, and went to live in France, where, if he did not increase, he did not seriously diminish it; and France added to the pleasant stock of his knowledge.

On returning to England, he set about exerting himself in a manner equally creditable to his talents and interesting to the public. I will not insult either the modesty or the understanding of Mr. Horace Smith, by comparing him with the author of "Old Mortality" and "Guy Mannering;" but I will venture to say, that the earliest of his novels, "Brambletye House," ran a hard race with the novel of "Woodstock," and that it contained more than one character not unworthy of the best volumes of Sir Walter. I allude to the ghastly troubles of the Regicide in his lone house; the outward phlegm and merry inward malice of Winky Boss (a happy name,) who gravely smoked a pipe with his mouth, and laughed with his eyes; and, above all, to the character of the princely Dutch merchant, who would cry out that he should be ruined, at seeing a few nutmegs dropped from a bag, and would then go and give a thousand ducats for an antique. This is hitting the high mercantile character to a nicety,—minute and careful in its means, princely in its ends. If the ultimate effect of commerce (*per-*

*multi transibunt*, &c.) were not something very different from what its pursuers imagine, the character would be a dangerous one to society at large, because it throws a gloss over the spirit of money-getting, which in a thousand instances to one is a debasing spirit; but meanwhile nobody could paint it better, or has a right to recommend it more, than he who has been the first to make it a handsome portrait.

The personal appearance of Mr. Horace Smith, like that of all the individuals I ever met with, is highly indicative of his character. His figure is good and manly, inclining to the robust; and his countenance extremely frank and cordial, sweet without weakness. I have been told, he is irascible. If so, his city training is in fault, not he. He has not a jot of it in his appearance.

MR. FUSELI.—MR. BONNYCASTLE.—  
MR. KINNAIRD.

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AT the hospitable table of Mr. Hunter, the bookseller, in St. Paul's Church-yard, I became acquainted with the survivors of the literary party that used to dine with his predecessor, Mr. Johnson. They came, as of old, on the Friday. The most regular were Mr. Fuseli, and Mr. Bonnycastle. Now and then, Mr. Godwin was present: oftener Mr. Kinnaird the magistrate, a great lover of Horace.

Fuseli was a small man, with energetic features, and a white head of hair. Our host's daughter, then a little girl, used to call him the whiteheaded lion. He combed his hair up from the forehead, and as his whiskers were large, his face was set in a kind of hairy frame, which, in addition to the fierceness of his look, really gave him an aspect of that sort. Otherwise, his features were rather sharp than round. He would have looked much like an old officer, if his face, besides his real energy, had not affected more. There was the same defect in it as in his pictures. Conscious of not having all the strength he wished, he endeavoured to make out for it by violence and pretension. He carried this so far, as to look fiercer than usual when he sat for his picture. His friend and engraver, Mr. Houghton, drew an admirable likeness of him in this state of dignified extravagance. He is sitting back in his chair, leaning on his hand, but looking ready to



pounce withal. His notion of repose was like that of Pistol:

“ Now, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies’ lap.”

Agreeably to this over-wrought manner, he was reckoned, I believe, not quite so bold as he might have been. He painted horrible pictures, as children tell horrible stories; and was frightened at his own lay-figures. Yet he would hardly have talked as he did about his terrors, had he been as timed as some supposed him. With the affected, impression is the main thing, let it be produced how it may. A student of the Academy told me, that Mr. Fuseli coming in one night, when a solitary candle had been put on the floor in a corner of the room, to produce some effect or other, he said it looked “like a damned soul.” This was by way of being Dantesque, as Michael Angelo was. He was an ingenious caricaturist of that master, making great bodily displays of mental energy, and being ostentatious with his limbs and muscles, in proportion as he could not draw them. A leg or arm was to be thrust down one’s throat, because he knew we should dispute the truth of it. In the indulgence of this wilfulness of purpose, generated partly by impatience of study, partly by want of sufficient genius, and, no doubt, also by a sense of superiority to artists who could do nothing but draw correctly, he cared for no time, place, or circumstance, in his pictures. A set of prints, after his designs, for Shakspeare and Cowper, exhibit a chaos of mingled genius and absurdity, such as perhaps was never before seen, and afford an hour’s entertainment of the most ludicrous description. He endeavoured to bring Michael Angelo’s apostles and prophets, with their superhuman ponderousness of intention, into the common-places of modern life. A Student reading in a Garden, is all over intensity of muscle: and the quiet tea-table scene in Cowper, he has turned into a preposterous conspiracy of huge men and women, all bent on showing their thews and postures, with dresses as fantastical as their minds. One gentleman, of the existence of whose trowsers you are not aware till you see the terminating line at the ankle, is sitting and looking

grim on a sofa, with his hat on, and no waistcoat. Yet there is real genius in his designs for Milton, though disturbed, as usual, by strainings after the energetic. His most extraordinary mistake, after all, is said to have been on the subject of his colouring. It is a sort of lived green, like brass diseased. Yet they say, that when praised for one of his pictures, he would modestly answer, "It is a pretty colour." One would have thought this a joke, if remarkable stories were not told of the mistake made by other people with regard to colour. Sight seems the least agreed upon, of all the senses.

Mr. Fuseli was lively and interesting in conversation, but not without his usual faults of violence and pretension. Nor was he always as decorous as an old man ought to be, especially one whose turn of mind is not of the lighter and more pleasurable cast. The licenses he took were coarse, and had not sufficient regard to his company. Certainly they went a great deal beyond his friend Armstrong; to whose account, I believe, Mr. Fuseli's passion for swearing was laid. The poet condescended to be a great swearer, and Mr. Fuseli thought it energetic to swear like him. His friendship with Mr. Bonnycastle had something childlike and agreeable in it. They came and went away together, for years, like a couple of old school-boys. They also, like boys, rallied one another, and sometimes made a singular display of it,—Fuseli at least, for it was he that was the aggressor. I remember, one day, Bonnycastle told a story of a Frenchman, whom he had received at his house at Woolwich, and who invited him in return to visit him at Paris, if ever he should cross the water. "The Frenchman told me," said he, "that he had a *superb local*. When I went to Paris I called on him, and found he had a good prospect out of his window; but his *superb local* was at a hair-dresser's up two pair of stairs." "Vell, vell!" said Fuseli impatiently, (for though he spoke and wrote English remarkably well, he never got rid of his Swiss pronunciation)—"Vell—vay not—vay not—Vat is to hinder his local being superb for all *thtat*?" "I don't see," returned Bonnycastle, "how a barber's in an alley can be a superb local." "You doan't! Vell—but *thtat* is not thte barber's fault—It is yours." "How do you

make that out? I'm not an alley." "No; but you're coarsedly eegnorant." "I may be as ignorant as you are polite; but you don't prove any thing." "Ththevil I doan't! Did you not say he had a faine prospect out of window?" "Yes, he had a prospect fine enough." "Vell, ththat constituted his superb local. A superb local is not a barber's shop, by Goade! but a faine situation. But that is your coarsed eegnorance of ththe language."

Another time, on Mr. Bonnycastle's saying that there were no longer any *Auto da Fé*s, Fuseli said he did not know that. "At all events," said he, "if you were to go into Spain, they would have an auto-da-fé immadiately, oan ththe strength of your appearance."

Bonnycastle was a good fellow. He was a tall, gaunt, long-headed man, with large features and spectacles, and a deep internal voice, with a twang of rusticity in it; and he goggled over his plate, like a horse. I have often thought that a bag of corn would have hung well on him. His laugh was equine, and showed his teeth upwards at the sides. Mr. Wordsworth would have thought it ominous. Mr. Bonnycastle was passionately fond of quoting Shakspeare, and telling stories; and if the Edinburgh Review had just come out, would give us all the jokes in it. He had once a hypochondriacal disorder of long duration, but had entirely outlived it. He said he should never forget the comfortable sensation given him one night during this disorder, by his knocking a landlord, that was insolent to him, down the man's staircase. On the strength of this piece of energy (having first ascertained that the offender was not killed) he went to bed, and had a sleep of unusual soundness. Perhaps he thought more highly of his talents, than the amount of them strictly warranted; a mistake to which scientific men appear to be more liable than others, the universe they work in being so large, and their universality (in Bacon's sense of the word) being at the same time so small. But the delusion was not only pardonable, but desirable, in a man so zealous in the performance of his duties, and so much of a human being to all about him, as Mr. Bonnycastle was. It was delightful one day to hear him speak with complacency of a translation which



had appeared of one of his books in Arabic, and which began by saying, on the part of the translator, that "it had pleased God, for the advancement of human knowledge, to raise us up a Bonnycastle." Some of his stories were a little romantic, and no less authentic. He had an anecdote of a Scotchman, who boasted of being descended from the Admirable Crichton; in proof of which, the Scotchman said he had "a grit quantity of table-leenen in his possession, marked A. C. Admirable Creechton."

Mr. Kinnaird, the magistrate, was a stout sanguine man, under the middle height, with a fine laming black eye, lively to the last, and a person that "had increased, was increasing, and ought to have been diminished;" which is by no means what he thought of the prerogative. Next to his bottle, he was fond of his Horace; and in the intervals of business at the police-office, would enjoy both in his arm-chair. Between the vulgar calls of this kind of magistracy, and the perusal of the urbane Horace, there must be a gusto of contradiction, which the bottle, perhaps, is required to render quite palatable. Fielding did not love his bottle the less for being obliged to lecture the drunken. Nor did his son, who succeeded him in taste and office. I know not how the late laureat, Mr. Pye, managed;—another man of letters, who was fain to accept a situation of this kind. Having been a man of fortune, and a Member of Parliament, and loving Horace to boot, he could hardly have done without his wine. I saw him once in a state of scornful indignation at being interrupted in the perusal of a manuscript by the monitions of his police officers, who were obliged to remind him over and over again that he was a magistrate, and that the criminal multitude were in waiting. Every time the door opened, he threatened and he implored.

"Otium divos rogat in patenti  
Prensus."

Had you quoted this to Mr. Kinnaird, his eyes would have sparkled with good fellowship: he would have finished the verse and the bottle with you, and proceeded

to as many more as your head could stand. Poor fellow! the last time I saw him, he was an apparition formidably substantial. The door of our host's dining-room opened without my hearing it, and happening to turn round, I saw a figure in a great coat, literally almost as broad as it was long, and scarcely able to articulate. He was dying of a dropsy, and was obliged to revive himself, before he was fit to converse, by the wine that was killing him. But he had cares besides, and cares of no ordinary description; and for my part I will not blame even his wine for killing him, unless his cares could have done it more agreeably. After dinner that day, he was comparatively himself again, quoted his Horace as usual, talked of lords and courts with a relish; and begged that *God save the King* might be played to him on the piano-forte; to which he listened, as if his soul had taken its hat of. I believe he would have liked to have died to *God save the King*, and to have "waked and found those visions true."

## MR. CHARLES LAMB.

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CHARLES LAMB has a head worthy of Aristotle, with as fine a heart as ever beat in human bosom, and limbs very fragile to sustain it. There is a caricature of him sold in the shops, which pretends to be a likeness. P—r went into the shop in a passion, and asked the man what he meant by putting forth such a libel. The man apologized, and said that the artist meant no offence. The face is a gross misrepresentation. Mr. Lamb's features are strongly yet delicately cut: he has a fine eye as well as forehead; and no face carries in it greater marks of thought and feeling. It resembles that of Bacon, with less worldly vigour, and more sensibility.

As his frame, so is his genius. It is as fit for thought as can be, and equally as unfit for action; and this renders him melancholy, apprehensive, humorous, and willing to make the best of every thing as it is, both from tenderness of heart and abhorrence of alteration. His understanding is too great to admit an absurdity; his frame is not strong enough to deliver it from a fear. His sensibility to strong contrasts is the foundation of his humour, which is that of a wit at once melancholy and willing to be pleased. He will beard a superstition, and shudder at the old phantasm while he does it. One could imagine him cracking a jest in the teeth of a ghost, and melting into thin air himself, out of a sympathy with the awful. His humour and his knowledge both, are those of Hamlet, of Molière, of Carlin, who shook a city with laughter, and, in order to divert his melancholy, was recommended to go and hear himself. Yet he extracts a real pleasure out of his jokes, because good-heartedness



retains that privilege, when it fails in every thing else. I should say he condescended to be a punster, if condescension were a word befitting wisdom like his. Being told that somebody had lampooned him, he said, "Very well; I'll Lamb-pun him." His puns are admirable, and often contain as deep things as the wisdom of some who have greater names. Such a man, for instance, as Nicole the Frenchman, was a baby to him. He would have cracked a score of jokes at him, worth his whole book of sentences; pelted his head with pearls. Nicole would not have understood him, but Rochefoucault would, and Pascal too; and some of our old Englishmen would have understood him still better. He would have been worthy of hearing Shakspeare read one of his scenes to him, hot from the brain. Common-place finds a great comforter in him, as long as it is good-natured; it is to the ill-natured or the dictatorial only that he is startling. Willing to see society go on as it does, because he despairs of seeing it otherwise, but not at all agreeing in his interior with the common notions of crime and punishment, he "*dumbfounded*" a long tirade one evening, by taking the pipe out of his mouth, and asking the speaker, "Whether he meant to say that a thief was not a good man?" To a person abusing Voltaire, and indiscreetly opposing his character to that of Jesus Christ, he said admirably well, (though he by no means overrates Voltaire, nor wants reverence in the other quarter,) that "Voltaire was a very good Jesus Christ *for the French*." He likes to see the church-goers continue to go to church, and has written a tale in his sister's admirable little book (Mrs. Leicester's School) to encourage the rising generation to do so: but to a conscientious deist he has nothing to object; and if an atheist found every other door shut against him, he would assuredly not find his. I believe he would have the world remain precisely as it is, provided it innovated no farther; but this spirit in him is any thing but a worldly one, or for his own interest. He hardly contemplates with patience the fine new buildings in the Regent's Park; and, privately speaking, he has a grudge against *official* heaven-expounders, or clergymen. He would rather, however, be with a crowd that he dislikes, than feel himself alone. He said to me one day,

with a face of solemnity, "What must have been that man's feelings who thought himself *the first deist!*" Finding no footing in certainty, he delights to confound the borders of theoretical truth and falsehood. He is fond of telling wild stories to children, engrafted on things about them; writes letters to people abroad, telling them that a friend of theirs has come out in genteel comedy; and persuaded G. D. that *Lord Castlereagh* was the author of *Waverley*! The same excellent person, walking one evening out of his friend's house into the New River, Mr. Lamb (who was from home at the time) wrote a paper under his signature of Elia (now no longer anonymous,) stating, that common friends would have stood dallying on the bank, have sent for neighbours, &c.; but that *he*, in his magnanimity, jumped in and rescued his friend after the old noble fashion." He wrote in the same magazine two Lives of Liston and Munden, which the public took for serious, and which exhibit an extraordinary jumble of imaginary facts and truth of bye-painting. Munden he makes born at "Stoke-Pogeis;" the very sound of which is like the actor speaking and digging his words. He knows how many false conclusions and pretensions are made by men who profess to be guided by facts only, as if facts could not be misconceived, or figments taken for them; and therefore one day, when somebody was speaking of a person who valued himself on being a matter-of-fact man, "Now," says he, "I value myself on being a matter-of-lie man." This does not hinder his being a man of the greatest veracity, in the ordinary sense of the word; but "truth," he says, "is precious, and ought not to be wasted on every body." Those who wish to have a genuine taste of him, and an insight into his modes of life, should read his essays on *Hogarth* and *King Lear*, his article on the *London Streets*, on *Whist-Playing*, which he loves, and on *Saying Grace Before Meat*, which he thinks a strange moment to select for being grateful. He said once to a brother whist-player, who was a hand more clever than clean, and who had enough in him to afford the joke, "M., if dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold!"

This is an article very short of what I should wish to write on my friend's character; but perhaps I could not

do it better. There is something in his modesty as well as wisdom, which hinders me from saying more. He has seen strange faces of calamity; but they have not made him love those of his fellow-creatures the less. The ingenious artist who has presented the public with his, will excuse one of his friends for thinking that he has done more justice to the moral than the intellectual character of it; which, in truth, it is very difficult to do, whether with pencil or with pen. A celebrated painter has said, that no one but Raphael could have done full justice to Raphael's face: which is a remark at once startling and consolatory to us inferior limners.



## MR. COLERIDGE.

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Mr. LAMB's friend, Mr. COLERIDGE, is as little fitted for action as he, but on a different account. His person is of a good height, but as sluggish and solid as the other's is light and fragile. He has, perhaps, suffered it to look old before its time, for want of exercise. His hair, too, is quite white (though he cannot much exceed fifty;) and as he generally dresses in black, and has a very tranquil demeanour, his appearance is gentlemanly, and begins to be reverend. Nevertheless, there is something invincibly young in the look of his face: it is round and fresh-coloured, with agreeable features, and an open, indolent, good-natured mouth. This boy-like expression is very becoming to one who dreams as he did when he was a child, and who passes his life apart from the rest of the world, with a book, and his flowers. His forehead is prodigious,—a great piece of placid marble; and fine eyes, in which all the activity of his mind seems to concentrate, move under it with a sprightly ease, as if it were pastime to them to carry all that thought.

And it is pastime. Mr. Hazlitt says, that Mr. Coleridge's genius appears to him like a spirit, all head and wings, eternally floating about in ætherialities. He gives me a different impression. I fancy him a good-natured wizard, very fond of earth, and conscious of reposing with weight enough in his easy chair, but able to conjure his ætherialities about him in the twinkling of an eye. He can also change them by thousands, and dismiss them as easily as when his dinner comes. It is a mighty intellect put upon a sensual body; and the reason why he

does little more with it than talk and dream, is that it is agreeable to such a body to do little else. I do not mean that Mr. Coleridge is a sensualist in an ill sense. He is capable of too many innocent pleasures, to take any pleasure in the way that a man of the world would take it. The idlest things he did would have a warrant. But if all the senses, in their time, have not found lodging in that humane plenitude of his, never believe they did in Thomson or in Boccaccio. Two affirmatives in him make a negative. He is very metaphysical and very corporeal; and he does nothing. His brains plead all sorts of questions before him, and he hears them with so much impartiality, (his spleen not giving him any trouble,) that he thinks he might as well sit in his easy chair and hear them forever, without coming to a conclusion. It has been said that he took opium to deaden the sharpness of his cogitations. I will undertake to affirm, that if he ever took any thing to deaden a sensation within, him, it was for no greater or more marvellous reason than other people take it; which is, because they do not take enough exercise, and so plague their heads with their livers. Opium, perhaps, might settle an uneasiness of this sort in Mr. Coleridge, as it did in a much less man with a much greater body, the Shadwell of Dryden. He would then resume his natural ease, and sit, and be happy, till want of exercise must be again supplied. The vanity of criticism like all our other vanities, except that of dress, (which so far has an involuntary philosophy in it,) is always forgetting that we are at least half made up of body. Mr. Hazlitt is angry that Mr. Coleridge is not as zealous in behalf of liberty as he used to be when young. I am sorry for it, too; and, if other men, as well as Mr. Hazlitt, did not keep me in heart, should think that the world was destined to be repeatedly lost, for want either of perseverance or calmness. But Mr. Coleridge had less right to begin his zeal in favour of liberty, than he had to leave it off. He should have bethought himself first, whether he had the courage not to get fat.

As to the charge against him, of eternally probing the depths of his own mind, and trying what he can make of them out of the ordinary road of logic and philosophy, I see no harm in a man's taking this new sort of experi-

ment upon him, whatever little chance there may be of his doing any thing with it. He is but one man; his faculties incline him to the task, and are suitable to it; and it is impossible to say what new worlds may be laid open, some day or other, by this apparently hopeless process. The fault of Mr. Coleridge, like that of all thinkers indisposed to action, is, that he is too content with things as they are,—at least, too fond of thinking that old corruptions are full of good things, if the world did but understand them. Now, here is the dilemma; for it requires an understanding like his own to refine upon and turn them to good as he might do; and what the world require is not metaphysical refinement, but a hearty use of good sense. Mr. Coleridge, indeed, can refine his meaning, so as to accommodate it with great good-nature to every one that comes across him; and doubtless he finds more agreement of intention among people of different opinions, than they themselves are aware of, which it is good to let them see. But when not enchained by his harmony, they fall asunder again, or go and commit the greatest absurdities for want of the subtle connecting tie; as may be seen in the books of his disciple Mr. Irving, who, eloquent in one page, and reasoning in a manner that a child ought to be ashamed of in the next, thinks to avail himself now-a-days of the old menacing tone of damnation without being thought a quack or an idiot, purely because Mr. Coleridge showed him last Friday that damnation was not what its preachers took it for. With the same subtlety and good-nature of interpretation, Mr. Coleridge will persuade a Deist that he is a Christian, and an Atheist that he believes in God: all which would be very good, if the world could get on by it, and not remain stationary; but, meanwhile, millions are wretched with having too little to eat, and thousands with having too much; and these subtleties are like people talking in their sleep, when they should be up and helping.

However, if the world is to remain always as it is, give me to all eternity new talk of Coleridge, and new essays of Charles Lamb. They will reconcile it beyond all others; and that is much.

Mr. Coleridge is fat, and begins to lament, in very



delightful verses, that he is getting infirm. There is no old age in his verses. I heard him the other day, under the grove at Highgate, repeat one of his melodious lamentations, as he walked up and down, his voice undulating in a stream of music, and his regrets of youth sparkling with visions ever young. At the same time, he did me the honour to show me, that he did not think so ill of all modern liberalism as some might suppose, denouncing the pretensions of the money-getting in a style which I should hardly venture upon, and never could equal; and asking, with a triumphant eloquence, what chastity itself were worth, if it were a casket, not to keep love in, but hate, and strife, and worldliness. On the same occasion, he built up a metaphor out of a flower, in a style surpassing the famous passage in Milton; deducing it from its root in religious mystery, and carrying it up into the bright consummate flower, "the bridal chamber of reproductiveness." Of all "the Muse's mysteries," he is as great a high-priest as Spenser; and Spenser himself might have gone to Highgate to hear him talk, and thank him for his "Ancient Mariner." His voice does not always sound very sincere; but perhaps the humble and deprecating tone of it, on those occasions, is out of consideration for his hearer's infirmities, rather than produced by his own. He recited his "Kubla Khan," one morning, to Lord Byron, in his Lordship's house in Piccadilly, when I happened to be in another room. I remember the other's coming away from him, highly struck with his poem, and saying how wonderfully he talked. This is the impression of every body who hears him.

It is no secret that Mr. Coleridge lives in the Grove at Highgate with a friendly family, who have sense and kindness enough to know that they do themselves an honour by looking after the comforts of such a man. His room looks upon a delicious prospect of wood and meadow, with coloured gardens under the window, like an embroidery to the mantle. I thought, when I first saw it, that he had taken up his dwelling-place like an abbot. Here he cultivates his flowers, and has a set of birds for his pensioners, who come to breakfast with him.

He may be seen taking his daily stroll up and down with his black coat and white locks, and a book in his hand: and is a great acquaintance of the little children. His main occupation, I believe, is reading. He loves to read old folios, and to make old voyages with Purchas and Marco Polo; the seas being in good visionary condition, and the vessel well-stocked with botargoes.

**RECOLLECTIONS**  
**OF**  
**THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.**

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**FAMILY PORTRAITS.—CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR'S  
FATHER.**

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MY ancestors, on the father's side, were Tories and Cavaliers, who fled from the tyranny of Cromwell, and settled in Barbadoes. For several generations, himself included, they were clergymen. My grandfather was Rector of St. Michael's, in Bridgetown, Barbadoes. He was a good-natured man, and recommended the famous Lauder to the mastership of the free-school there; influenced, no doubt, partly by his pretended repentance, and partly by sympathy with his Toryism. Lauder is said to have been discharged for misconduct. I never heard that; but I have heard that his appearance was decent, and that he had a wooden leg: which is an anti-climax befitting his history. My grandfather was admired and beloved by his parishioners, for the manner in which he discharged his duties. He died at an early age, in con-



sequence of a fever taken in the hot and damp air, while officiating incessantly at burials during a mortality. His wife was an O'Brien, very proud of her descent from the kings of Ireland. She was as good-natured and beloved as her husband, and very assiduous in her attentions to the negroes and to the poor, for whom she kept a set of medicines, like my Lady Bountiful. They had two children besides my father; Anne Courthope, who died unmarried; and Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Dayrell, Esq. of Barbadoes, father by a first marriage of the barrister of that name. I mention both of these ladies, because they will come among my portraits.

To these their children, the worthy rector and his wife were a little too indulgent. When my father was to go to the American Continent to school, the latter dressed up her boy in a fine suit of laced clothes, such as we see on the little gentlemen in Hogarth, but so splendid and costly, that when the good pastor beheld him, he was moved to utter an expostulation. Objection, however, soon gave way before the pride of all parties; and my father set off for school, ready spoilt, with plenty of money to spoil him more.

He went to college at Philadelphia, and became the scape-grace who smuggled in the wine, and bore the brunt of the tutors. My father took the degree of Master of Arts both at Philadelphia and New York. When he spoke the farewell oration on leaving college, two young ladies fell in love with him, one of whom he afterwards married. He was fair and handsome, with delicate features, a small aquiline nose, and blue eyes. To a graceful address he joined a remarkably fine voice, which he modulated with great effect. It was in reading, with this voice, the poets and other classics of England, that he completed the conquest of my mother's heart. He used to spend his evenings in this manner with her and her family,—a noble way of courtship; and my grandmother became so hearty in his cause, that she succeeded in carrying it against her husband, who wished his daughter to marry a wealthy neighbour.

My father was intended, I believe, to carry on the race of clergymen, as he afterwards did; but he went, in the first instance, into the law. The Americans united

the practice of attorney and barrister. My father studied the law under articles to one of the chief persons in the profession; and afterwards practised with distinction himself. At this period (by which time all my brothers, now living, were born) the Revolution broke out; and he entered with so much zeal into the cause of the British Government, that besides pleading for Loyalists with great fervour at the bar, he wrote pamphlets equally full of party warmth, which drew on him the popular odium. His fortunes then came to a crisis in America. Early one morning, a great concourse of people appeared before his house. He came out,—or was brought. They put him into a cart prepared for the purpose, (conceive the anxiety of his wife!) and, after parading him about the streets, were joined by a party of the Revolutionary soldiers with drum and fife. The multitude then went with him to the house of Dr. Kearsley, a staunch Tory, who shut up the windows, and endeavoured to prevent their getting in. The doctor had his hand pierced by a bayonet, as it entered between the shutters behind which he had planted himself. He was dragged out, and put into the cart all over blood; but he lost none of his intrepidity; for he answered all their reproaches and outrage with vehement reprehensions; and by way of retaliation on the “Rogue’s March,” struck up “God save the King.” My father gave way as little as the Doctor. He would say nothing that was dictated to him, nor renounce a single opinion; but, on the other hand, he maintained a tranquil air, and endeavoured to persuade his companion not to add to their irritation. This was to no purpose. Dr. Kearsley continued infuriate, and more than once fainted from loss of blood and the violence of his feelings. The two Loyalists narrowly escaped tarring and feathering. A tub of tar, which had been set in a conspicuous place in one of the streets for that purpose, was overturned by an officer intimate with our family. My father, however, did not escape entirely from personal injury. One of the stones thrown by the mob gave him such a severe blow on the head, as not only laid him swooning in the cart, but dimmed his sight for life, so as to oblige him from that time to wear spectacles. At length, after being carried through every street in Phila-

delphia, the two captives were deposited, in the evening, in a prison in Market Street. What became of Dr. Kearsley, I cannot say. My father, by means of a large sum of money given to the sentinel who had charge of him, was enabled to escape at midnight. He went immediately on board a ship in the Delaware, that belonged to my grandfather, and was bound for the West Indies. She dropped down the river that same night; and my father went first to Barbadoes, and afterwards to England, where he settled.

My mother was to follow my father as soon as possible, which she was not able to do for many months. The last time she had seen him, he was a lawyer and a partisan, going out to meet an irritated populace. On her arrival in England, she beheld him in a pulpit, a clergyman, preaching tranquillity. When my father came over, he found it impossible to continue his profession as a lawyer. Some actors, who heard him read, advised him to go on the stage; but he was too proud for that, and went into the church. He was ordained by the celebrated Lowth, then Bishop of London; and he soon became so popular that the Bishop sent for him, and remonstrated against his preaching so many charity sermons. He said it was ostentatious in a clergyman, and that he saw his name in too many advertisements. My father thought it strange, but acquiesced. It is true, he preached a great many of these sermons. I am told, that for a whole year he did nothing else: and perhaps there was something in his manner a little startling to the simplicity of the church of England. I remember when he came to that part of the Litany where the reader prays for deliverance "in the hour of death and at the day of judgment," he used to make a pause at the word "death," and drop his voice on the rest of the sentence. The effect was striking; but repetition must have hurt it. I am afraid it was a little theatrical. His delivery, however, was so much admired by those who thought themselves the best judges, that Thomas Sheridan, father of the late Sheridan, came up to him one day after service, in the vestry, and complimented him on having profited so well from his Treatise on Reading the Liturgy. My father was obliged to tell him, that he had never seen it.



I do not know whether it was Lowth, but it was some Bishop, to whom my father one day, in the midst of a warm discussion, being asked "if he knew who he was?" replied with a bow, "Yes, my Lord; dust and ashes." Doubtless the new clergyman was warm and imprudent. In truth, he made a great mistake when he entered the profession. By the nature of the tenure, it was irretrievable; and his whole life after was a series of errors, arising from the unsuitability of his position. He was fond of divinity; but it was as a speculator, and not as a dogmatist, or one who takes upon trust. He was ardent in the cause of Church and State; but here he speculated too, and soon began to modify his opinions, which got him the ill-will of the Government. He delighted his audiences in the pulpit; so much so, that he had crowds of carriages at the door. One of his congregations had an engraving made of him; and a lady of the name of Cooling, who was member of another, left him by will the sum of £500, as a testimony of the pleasure and advantage she had derived from his discourses. But unfortunately, after delighting his hearers in the pulpit, he would delight some of them a little too much over the table. He was neither witty nor profound; but he had all the substitutes for wit that animal spirits could supply: he was shrewd, spirited, and showy; could flatter without grossness: had stories to tell of lords whom he knew; and when the bottle was to circulate, it did not stand with him. All this was dangerous to a West Indian who had an increasing family, and was to make his way in the Church. It was too much for him; and he added another to the list of those who, though they might suffice equally for themselves and others in a more considerate and contented state of society, and seem born to be the delights of it, are only lost and thrown out in a system of things, which, by going upon the ground of individual aggrandisement, compels dispositions of a more sociable and reasonable nature either to become parties concerned, or be ruined in the refusal. It is doubtless incumbent on a husband and father to be careful under all circumstances; and it is very easy for most people to talk of the necessity of being so, and to recommend it to others, especially when

they have been educated to that habit. Let those fling the first stone, who, with real inclination and talent for other things, (for the inclination may not be what they take it for,) confine themselves industriously to the duties prescribed them. There are more victims to errors committed by society themselves, than society choose to suppose. But I grant that a man is either bound to tell them so, or to do as they do. My father unluckily had neither uneasiness enough in his blood, nor imagination enough in lieu of it, to enter sufficiently into the uneasiness of others, and so grapple vigorously with his fortune for their sakes; neither, on the other hand, had he enough energy of speculation to see what could be done towards rendering the world a little wiser: and as to the pride of cutting a figure a little above his neighbours, which so many men mistake for a better principle of action, he could dispense with that. As it was, he should have been kept at home in Barbadoes. He was a true exotic, and ought not to have been transplanted. He might have preached there, and quoted Horace, and been gentlemanly, and drank his claret, and no harm done. But, in a bustling, commercial, state of society, where the enjoyment, such as it is, consists in the bustle, he was neither very likely to succeed, nor to meet with a good construction, nor to end his pleasant ways with pleasing either the world or himself.

It was in the pulpit of Bentinck Chapel, Lisson Green, Paddington, that my mother found her husband officiating. He published a volume of sermons preached there, in which there is little but elegance of diction and a graceful morality. His delivery was the charm; and, to say the truth, he charmed every body but the owner of the chapel, who looked upon rent as by far the most eloquent production of the pulpit. The speculation ended with the preacher's being horribly in debt. Friends, however, were lavish of their assistance. Three of my brothers were sent to school; the other, at her earnest entreaty, went to live (which he did for some years) with Mrs. Spencer, a sister of Sir Richard Worsley, and a delicious little old woman, the delight of all the children of her acquaintance. My father and mother took breath, in the mean time, under the friendly roof of Mr.

West, who had married her aunt. The aunt and niece were much of an age, and both fond of books. Mrs. West, indeed, ultimately became a martyr to them; for the physician declared that she lost the use of her limbs by sitting in-doors.

From Newman Street my father went to live in Hampstead Square, whence he occasionally used to go and preach at Southgate. The then Duke of Chandos had a seat in the neighbourhood of Southgate. He heard my father preach, and was so much pleased with him, that he requested him to become tutor to his nephew, Mr. Leigh; which my father did, and remained with his Grace's family for several years. The Duke was Master of the Horse, and originated the famous epithet of "heaven-born minister," applied to Mr. Pitt, which occasioned a good deal of raillery. I have heard my father describe him as a man of great sweetness of nature, and good-breeding. Mr. Leigh, who died not long since, Member of Parliament for Addlestep, was son of the Duke's sister, Lady Caroline. He had a taste for poetry, which has been inherited by his son and heir, Mr. Chandos Leigh; and, like him, published a volume of poems. He was always very kind to my father, and was, I believe, a most amiable man. It was from him I received my name. I was born at Southgate in a house now a boarding-school and called Eagle-Hall: a magnificent name for a "preacher's modest mansion;" but I suppose it did not bear it then.

To be tutor in a ducal family is one of the roads to a bishoprick. My father was thought to be in the highest way to it. He was tutor in the house not only of a Duke, but of a State-Officer, for whom the King had a personal regard. His manners were of the highest order; his principles in Church and State as orthodox, to all appearance, as could be wished; and he had given up flourishing prospects in America for their sake: but his West Indian temperament spoiled all. He also, as he became acquainted with the Government, began to doubt its perfections; and the King, whose minuteness of information respecting the personal affairs of his subjects is well known, was doubtless prepared with questions



which the Duke was not equally prepared to answer, and perhaps did not hazard.

My father, meanwhile, was getting more and more distressed. He removed to Hampstead a second time: from Hampstead he crossed the water; and the first room I have any recollection of, is a prison.

Mr. West (which was doubly kind in a man by nature cautious and timid) again and again took the liberty of representing my father's circumstances to the King. It is well known that this artist enjoyed the confidence of his Majesty in no ordinary degree. The King would converse half a day at a time with him, while he was painting. His Majesty said he would speak to the bishops; and again, on a second application, he said my father should be provided for. My father himself also presented a petition; but all that was ever done for him, was the putting his name on the Loyalist Pension List for a hundred-a year;—a sum which he not only thought extremely inadequate for the loss of seven or eight times as much in America, a cheaper country, but which he felt to be a poor acknowledgment even for the active zeal he had evinced, and the things he had said and written; especially as it came late, and he was already involved. Small as it was, he was obliged to mortgage it; and from this time till the arrival of some relations from the West Indies, several years afterwards, he underwent a series of mortifications and distresses, not without great reason for self-reproach. Unfortunately for others, it might be said of him what Lady Mary Wortley said of her kinsman, Henry Fielding, "that give him his leg of mutton and bottle of wine, and in the very thick of calamity he would be happy for the time being." Too well able to seize a passing moment of enjoyment, he was always scheming, never performing; always looking forward with some romantic plan which was sure to succeed, and never put in practice. I believe he wrote more titles of non-existing books than Rabelais. At length, he found his mistake. My poor father! He grew deeply acquainted with prisons, and began to lose his graces and his good name, and became irritable with conscious error, and almost took hope out of the heart that loved him, and was too often glad to escape out of its society. Yet

such an art had he of making his home comfortable when he chose, and of settling himself to the most tranquil pleasures, that if she could have ceased to look forward about her children, I believe, with all his faults, those evenings would have brought unmingled satisfaction to her, when after settling the little apartment, brightening the fire, and bringing out the coffee, my mother knew that her husband was going to read Saurin or Barrow to her with his fine voice, and unequivocal enjoyment.

We thus struggled on between quiet and disturbance, between placid readings and frightful knocks at the door, and sickness, and calamity, and hopes which hardly ever forsook us. One of my brothers went to sea,—a great blow to my poor mother. The next was artied to an attorney. My brother Robert became pupil to an engraver, and my brother John apprentice to Mr. Reynell, the printer, whose kindly manners, and deep iron voice, I well remember and respect. I had also a regard for the speaking-trumpet, which ran all the way up his tall house, and conveyed his rugged whispers to his men. And his goodly wife, proud of her husband's grandfather, the Bishop; never shall I forget how much I loved her for her portly smiles and good dinners, and how often she used to make me measure heights with her fair daughter Caroline, and found me wanting; which I thought not quiet so hospitable.

As my father's misfortunes, in the first instance, were owing to feelings the most respected, so the causes of them subsequently (and the reader will be good enough to keep this in mind) were not unmixed with feelings of the kindest nature. He hampered himself greatly with becoming security for other people; and, though unable to settle himself to any regular work, his pen was always at the service of those who required it for memorials or other helps. As to his children, he was healthy and sanguine, and always looked forward to being able to do something for them; and something for them he did, if it was only in grafting his animal spirits on the maternal stock, and setting them an example of independent thinking. But he did more. He really took great care, considering his unbusiness-like habits, towards settling them in some line of life. It is our

faults, not his, if we have not been all so successful as we might have been: at least, it is no more his fault than that of the West Indian blood of which we all partake, and which has disposed all of us, more or less, to a certain aversion from business. And if it may be some vanity in us, at least it is no dishonour to our turn of mind, to hope, that we may have been the means of circulating more knowledge and entertainment in society, than if he had attained the bishoprick he looked for, and left us ticketed and labelled among the acquiescent.

Towards the latter part of his life, my father's affairs were greatly retrieved by the help of his sister, Mrs. Dayrell, who came over with a property from Barbadoes. My aunt was generous; part of her property came among us also by a marriage; and my father's West Indian sun was again warm upon him. On his sister's death, to be sure, his struggles recommenced, though nothing in comparison to what they had been. Recommence, however, they did; and yet so sanguine was he in his intentions to the last, and so accustomed had my mother been to try to believe in him, and to persuade herself she did, that, not long before she died, he made the most solemn promises of amendment, which by chance I could not help overhearing, and which she received with a tenderness and a tone of joy, the remembrance of which brings the tears into my eyes. My father had one taste well suited to his profession, and in him, I used to think, remarkable. He was very fond of sermons, which he was rarely tired of reading, or my mother of hearing. I have mentioned the effect which these used to have upon her. When she died, he could not bear to think she was dead; yet retaining, in the midst of his tears, his indestructible tendency to seize on a cheering reflection, he turned his very despair into consolation; and in saying "She is not dead, but sleeps," I verily believe the image became almost a literal thing with him. Besides his fondness for sermons, he was a great reader of the Bible. His copy of it is scored with manuscript; and I believe he read a portion of it every morning to the last, let him have been as right or as wrong as he pleased for the rest of the day. This was not hypocrisy: it was habit and real fondness; though,



while he was no hypocrite, he was not, I must confess, remarkable for being explicit about himself; nor did he cease to dogmatise in a sort of official manner upon faith and virtue, lenient as he thought himself bound to be to particular instances of frailty. To young people, who had no secrets from him, he was especially indulgent, as I have good reason to know. He delighted to show his sense of candour in others, which I believe he would have practised himself, had he been taught it early. For many years before his death, he had greatly relaxed in the orthodoxy of his religious opinions, and had totally changed his political. Both he and my mother had become Republicans and Unitarians. They were also Universalists, and great admirers of Mr. Winchester, particularly my mother.\* My father was willing, however, to hear all sides of the question, and used to visit the chapels of the most popular preachers of all denominations. His favourite among them, I think, was Mr. Worthington, who preached at a chapel in Long Acre, and had a strong natural eloquence. Politics and divinity occupied almost all the conversation that I heard at our fire-side. It is a pity my father had been so spoilt a child, and had got so much out of his sphere; for he could be contented with little. He was one of the last of the gentry who retained the old fashion of smoking. He indulged in it every night before he went to bed, which he did at an early hour; and it was pleasant to see him sit in his tranquil and gentlemanly manner, and relate anecdotes of "my Lord North" and the Rockingham administration, interspersed with those mild puffs and urbane resumptions of the pipe. How often have I thought of him under this aspect, and longed for the state of society that might have encouraged him to be more successful! Had he lived twenty years longer, he would have thought it was coming. He died in the year 1809, aged fifty-seven, and was buried in the

\* "The Universalists cannot, properly speaking, be called a distinct sect, as they are frequently found scattered amongst various denominations. They are so named from holding the benevolent opinion that all mankind, nay, even the demons themselves, will be finally restored to happiness, through the mercy of Almighty God."—*History of All Religions and Religious Ceremonies*, p. 263.

church-yard in Bishops-gate Street. I remember they quarrelled over his coffin for the perquisites of the candles; which put me upon a great many reflections, on him and the world.

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FAMILY PORTRAITS CONTINUED.—THE AUTHOR'S  
MOTHER.

My grandfather, by my mother's side, was Stephen Shewell, merchant of Philadelphia, who sent out his "argosies." His mother was a quaker; and he himself, I believe, descended from a quaker stock. He had ships trading to England, Holland, and the West Indies, and used to put his sons and nephews in them as captains, probably to save charges, for, in every thing but stocking his cellars with provision, he was penurious. For sausages and "botargoes," (first authors, perhaps, of the jaundice in our blood,) Friar John would have commended him. As Chaucer says,

"It snowed, in his house of meat and drink."

On that side of the family we seem all sailors and rough subjects, with a mitigation of quakerism; as, on the father's, we are creoles and claret drinkers, very polite and clerical.

My grandmother's maiden name was Bickley. I believe her family came from Buckinghamshire. The coat of arms are three half moons; which I happen to recollect, because of a tradition we had, that an honourable augmentation was made to them of three wheat-sheaves, in reward of some gallant achievement performed in cutting off a convoy of provisions by Sir William Bickley, a partisan of the House of Orange, who was made a Banneret. My grandmother was an open-hearted, cheerful woman, of a good healthy blood, and as generous as her husband was otherwise. The family consisted of five daughters and two sons. One of the daughters died unmarried: the three surviving ones are now wives, and mothers of families, in Philadelphia. They and their

husbands, agreeably to the American law of equal division, are in the receipt of a pretty property in lands and houses; our due share of which, some inadvertence on our parts appears to have forfeited. I confess I often wish, at the close of a morning's work, that people were not so excessively delicate on legal points, and so afraid of hurting the feelings of others, by supposing it possible for them to want a little of their grandfather's money. But I believe I ought to blush, while I say this: and I do.—One of my uncles died in England, a mild, excellent creature, more fit for solitude than the sea. The other, my uncle Stephen, a fine handsome fellow of great good-nature and gallantry, was never heard of, after leaving the port of Philadelphia for the West Indies. He had a practice of crowding too much sail, which is supposed to have been his destruction. They said he did it “to get back to his ladies.” My uncle was the means of saving his namesake, my brother Stephen, from a singular destiny. Some Indians, who came into the city to traffic, had been observed to notice my brother a good deal. It is supposed they saw in his tall little person, dark face, and long black hair, a resemblance to themselves. One day they enticed him from my grandfather's house in Front Street, and taking him to the Delaware, which was close by, were carrying him off across the river, when his uncle descried them and gave the alarm. His threats induced them to come back; otherwise, it is thought, they intended to carry him into their own quarters, and bring him up as an Indian; so that instead of a rare character of another sort,—an attorney who would rather compound a quarrel for his clients than get rich by it,—we might have had for a brother the Good Buffalo, Bloody Bear, or some such grim personage. I will indulge myself with the liberty of observing in this place, that with great diversity of character among us, with strong points of dispute even among ourselves, and with the usual amount, though not perhaps exactly the like nature, of infirmities common to other people,—some of us, may be, with greater,—we are all persons who inherit the power of making sacrifices for the sake of what we consider a principle.

My grandfather, though intimate with Dr. Franklin,



was secretly on the British side of the question, when the American war broke out. He professed to be neutral, and to attend only to business; but his neutrality did not avail him. One of his most valuably laden ships was burnt in the Delaware by the Revolutionists, to prevent its getting into the hands of the British; and besides making free with his botargoes, they despatched every now and then a file of soldiers to rifle his house of every thing else that could be serviceable: linen, blankets, &c. And this, unfortunately, was only a taste of what he was to suffer; for, emptying his mercantile stores from time to time, they paid him with their continental currency, paper-money: the depreciation of which was so great as to leave him, at the close of the war, bankrupt of every thing but some houses, which his wife brought him; they amounted to a sufficiency for the family support: and thus, after all his cunning neutralities, and his preference of individual to public good, he owed all that he retained to a generous and unspeculating woman. His saving grace, however, was not on every possible occasion confined to his money. He gave a very strong instance (for him) of his partiality to the British cause, by secreting in his house a gentleman of the name of Slater, who commanded a small armed vessel on the Delaware, and who is now residing in London. Mr. Slater had been taken prisoner, and confined at some miles distance from Philadelphia. He contrived to make his escape, and astonished my grandfather's family by appearing before them at night, drenched in the rain, which descends in torrents in that climate. They secreted him for several months, in a room at the top of the house.

My mother, at that time, was a brunette with fine eyes, a tall lady-like person, and hair blacker than is seen of English growth. It was supposed, that the Anglo-Americans already began to exhibit the influence of climate in their appearance. The late Mr. West told me, that if he had met myself or any of my brothers in the streets, he should have pronounced, without knowing us, that we were Americans. A likeness has been discovered between us and some of the Indians in his pictures. My mother had no accomplishments but the two best of all, a love of nature and of books. Dr. Franklin offered to

teach her the guitar; but she was too bashful to become his pupil. She regretted this afterwards, partly no doubt for having missed so illustrious a master. Her first child, who died, was named after him. I know not whether the anecdote is new; but I have heard, that when Dr. Franklin invented the Harmonica, he concealed it from his wife, till the instrument was fit to play; and then woke her with it one night, when she took it for the music of angels. Among the visitors at my grandfather's house, besides Franklin, was Thomas Paine; whom I have heard my mother speak of, as having a countenance that inspired her with terror. I believe his aspect was not captivating; but most likely his political and religious opinions did it no good in the eyes of the fair loyalist.

My mother was diffident of her personal merit, but she had great energy of principle. When the troubles broke out, and my father took that violent part in favour of the King, a letter was received by her from a person high in authority, stating, that if her husband would desist from opposition to the general wishes of the Colonists, he should remain in security; but that if he thought fit to do otherwise, he must suffer the consequences which inevitably awaited him. The letter concluded with advising her, as she valued her husband's and family's happiness, to use her influence with him to act accordingly, To this, "in the spirit of old Rome and Greece," as one of her sons has proudly and justly observed, (I will add, of old England, and though contrary to her opinions then, of New America too) my mother replied, that she knew her husband's mind too well, to suppose for a moment that he would so degrade himself; and that the writer of the letter entirely mistook her, if he thought her capable of endeavouring to persuade him to any action contrary to the convictions of his heart, whatever the consequences threatened might be. Yet the heart of this excellent woman, strong as it was, was already beating with anxiety for what might occur; and on the day when my father was seized, she fell into a fit of the jaundice, so violent, as to affect her ever afterwards, and subject a previously fine constitution to every ill that came across it.

It was about two years before my mother could set off

with her children for England. She embarked in the *Earl of Effingham* frigate, Captain Dempster; who from the moment she was drawn up the sides of the vessel with her little boys, conceived a pity and respect for her, and paid her the most cordial attention. In truth, he felt more pity for her than he chose to express; for the vessel was old and battered, and he thought the voyage not without danger. Nor was it. They did very well till they came off the Scilly islands, when a storm arose which threatened to sink them. The ship was with difficulty kept above water. Here my mother again showed how courageous her heart could be, by the very strength of its tenderness. There was a lady in the vessel, who had betrayed weaknesses of various sorts during the voyage; and who even went so far as to resent the superior opinion, which the gallant Captain could not help entertaining of her fellow-passenger. My mother, instead of giving way to tears and lamentations, did all she could to keep up the spirits of her children. The lady in question did the reverse; and my mother, feeling the necessity of the case, and touched with pity for children in the same danger as her own, was at length moved to break through the delicacy she had observed, and expostulate strongly with her, to the increased admiration of the Captain, who congratulated himself on having a female passenger so truly worthy of the name of woman. Many years afterwards, near the same spot, and during a similar danger, her son, the writer of this book, with a wife and seven children around him, had occasion to call her to mind; and the example was of service even to him a man. It was thought a miracle that the *Earl of Effingham* was saved. It was driven into Swansea bay: and borne along, by the heaving might of the waves, into a shallow, where no vessel of so large a size ever appeared before; nor could it ever have got there, but by so unwonted an over-lifting.

Having been born nine years later than the youngest of my brothers, I have no recollection of my mother's earlier aspect. Her eyes were always fine, and her person lady-like; her hair also retained its colour for a long period; but her brown complexion had been exchanged for a jaundiced one, which she retained through life; and



her cheeks were sunken, and her mouth drawn down with sorrow at the corners. She retained the energy of her character on great occasions; but her spirit in ordinary was weakened, and she looked at the bustle and discord of the present state of society with a frightened aversion. My father's danger, and the war-whoops of the Indians, which she heard in Philadelphia, had shaken her soul as well as frame. The sight of two men fighting in the streets would drive her in tears down another road; and I remember when we lived near the Park, she would take me a long circuit out of the way, rather than hazard the spectacle of the soldiers. Little did she think of the timidity into which she was thus inoculating me, and what difficulty I should have, when I went to school, to sustain all those fine theories, and that unbending resistance to oppression, which she inculcated upon me. However, perhaps it ultimately turned out for the best. One must feel more than usual for the sore places of humanity, even to fight properly in their behalf. Never shall I forget her face, as it used to appear to me coming up the cloisters, with that weary hang of the head on one side, and that melancholy smile!

One holiday, in a severe winter, as she was taking me home, she was petitioned for charity by a woman, sick and ill clothed. It was in Blackfriars' Road; I think about midway. My mother, with the tears in her eyes, turned up a gate-way, or some such place, and beckoning the woman to follow, took off her flannel petticoat, and gave it her. It is supposed that a cold which ensued, fixed the rheumatism upon her for life. Actions like these have doubtless been often performed, and do not of necessity imply any great virtue in the performer; but they do, if they are of a piece with the rest of the character. Saints have been made for actions no greater.

The reader will allow me to quote a passage out of a poem of mine, because it was suggested by a recollection I had upon me of this excellent woman. It is almost the only passage in that poem worth repeating: which I mention, in order that he may lay the quotation purely to its right account, and not suppose I am anxious to repeat my verses because I fancy I cannot write bad ones.

In every thing but the word "happy," the picture is from life. The bird spoken of is the nightingale,—the

"Bird of wakeful glow  
Whose louder song is like the voice of life,  
Triumphant o'er death's image; but whose deep,  
Low, lonelier note is like a gentle wife,  
A poor, a pensive, yet a happy one,  
Stealing, when day-light's common tasks are done,  
An hour for mother's work; and singing low,  
While her tired husband and her children sleep."

I have spoken of my mother during my father's troubles in England. She stood by him through them all; and in every thing did more honour to marriage, than marriage did good to either of them: for it brought little happiness to her, and too many children to both. Of his changes of opinion, as well as of fortune, she partook also. She became a Unitarian, a Universalist, a Republican: and in her new opinions, as in her old, was apt, I suspect, to be a little too peremptory, and to wonder at those who could be of the other side. It is her only fault. I believe she would have mended it had she lived till now. I have been thought, in my time, to speak in unwarrantable terms of kings and princes. I think I did, and that society is no longer to be bettered in that manner, but in a much calmer and nobler way. But I was witness, in my childhood, to a great deal of suffering; I heard of more all over the world; and kings and princes bore a great share in the causes to which they were traced. Some of those causes were not to be denied. It is now to be understood, on all hands, that the continuation of the American war was owing to the personal stubbornness of the King. My mother, in her indignation at him, for being the cause of so much unnecessary bloodshed, thought that the unfortunate malady into which he fell, was a judgment on him from providence. The truth is, it was owing to mal-organization, and to the diseases of his father and mother. Madness, indeed, considered as an overwrought state of the will, may be considered as the natural malady of kings. They are in a false position, with regard to the rest of society; and their marriages with none but

each other's families tend to give the race its last deterioration. But in the case of the late unhappy monarch, the causes were obvious. My mother would now have reasoned better. She would have increased her stock of experience and observation; and in addition to her excellent understanding, she would have had the light of modern philosophy, by which Christianity itself is better read. After all, her intolerance was only in theory. When any thing was to be done, charity in her always ran before faith. If she could have served and benefited the King himself personally, indignation would soon have given way to humanity. She had a high opinion of every thing that was decorous and feminine on the part of a wife; yet when a poor violent woman, the wife of a very amiable and exemplary preacher, went so far on one occasion as to bite his hand in a fit of jealous rage as he was going to ascend his pulpit, (and he preached with it in great pain,) she was the only female of all her acquaintance that continued to visit her; alleging, that she wanted society and comfort so much the more. She had the highest notions of chastity; yet when a servant came to her who could get no place because she had had a child, my mother took her into her family, upon the strength of her candour and her destitute condition, and was served with an affectionate gratitude.

My mother's favourite books were "Dr. Young's Night Thoughts," (which was a pity,) and Mrs. Rowe's "Devout Exercises of the Heart." She was very fond of poetry, and used to hoard my verses in her pocket-book, and encourage me to write, by showing them to the Wests, and the Thorntons; the latter, her dearest friends, loved and honoured her to the last: and I believe they retain their regard for the family, politics notwithstanding. My mother's last illness was very long, and was tormented with rheumatism. I envy my brother Robert the recollection of the filial attentions he paid her; but they shall be as much known as I can make them, not because he is my brother, (which is nothing,) but because he was a good son, which is much; and every good son and mother will be my warrant. My other brothers, who were married, were away with their families; and I, who ought to have attended more, was as



giddy as I was young, or rather a great deal more so. I attended, but not enough. How often have we occasion to wish that we could be older or younger than we are, according as we desire to have the benefit of gaiety or experience!—Her greatest pleasure during her decay was to lie on a sofa, looking at the setting sun. She used to liken it to the door of heaven: and fancy her lost children there, waiting for her. She died in the fifty-third year of her age, in a little miniature house which stands in a row behind the church that has been since built in Somers Town; and was buried, as she had always wished to be, in the church-yard of Hampstead.

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FAMILY PORTRAITS CONTINUED:—THE LATE MR. WEST,  
AND HIS GALLERY.

The two principle houses at which I visited when a boy, till the arrival of our relations from the West Indies, were Mr. West's (late president of the Academy) in Newman-street, and Mr. Godfrey Thornton's (of the celebrated mercantile family) in Austin Friars. How I loved the graces in one, and every thing in the other! Mr. West had bought his house, not long, I believe, after he came to England; and he had added a gallery at the back of it, terminating in a couple of lofty rooms. The gallery was a continuation of the hall-passage, and, together with the rooms, formed three sides of a garden, very small but elegant, with a grass-plot in the middle, and busts upon stands under an arcade. In the interior, the gallery made an angle at a little distance as you went up it: then a shorter one, and then took a longer stretch into the two rooms; and it was hung with his sketches and other pictures all the way. In a corner between the two angles, and looking down the longer part of the gallery, was a study, with casts of Venus and Apollo on each side of the door. The two rooms contained the largest of his pictures; and in the farther one, after stepping softly down the gallery, as if respecting the dumb life on the walls, you generally found the mild and quiet artist at his work; happy, for he thought himself immortal.

I need not enter into the merits of an artist who is so well known, and has been so often criticised. He was a man with regular, mild features; and, though of Quaker origin, had the look of what he was, a painter to a court. His appearance was so gentlemanly, that the moment he changed his gown for a coat, he seemed to be full dressed. The simplicity and self-possession of the young Quaker, not having time enough to grow stiff, (for he went early to study at Rome,) took up, I suppose, with more ease than most would have done, the urbanities of his new position. And what simplicity helped him to, favour would retain. Yet this man, so well bred, and so indisputably clever in his art, (whatever might be the amount of his genius,) had received so careless, or so homely an education when a boy, that he could hardly read. He pronounced also some of his words, in reading, with a puritanical barbarism, such as *haive* for *have*, as some people pronounce when they sing psalms. But this was perhaps an American custom. My mother, who both read and spoke remarkably well, would say *haive*, and *shaul* (for *shall*,) when she sung her hymns. But it was not so well in reading lectures at the Academy. Mr. West would talk of his art all day long, painting all the while. On other subjects he was not so fluent; and on political and religious matters he tried hard to maintain the reserve common with those about a court. He succeeded ill in both. There were always strong suspicions of his leaning to his native side in politics; and during Bonaparte's triumph, he could not contain his enthusiasm for the Republican chief, going even to Paris to pay him his homage, when First Consul. The admiration of high colours and powerful effects, natural to a painter, was too strong for him. How he managed this matter with the higher powers in England, I cannot say. Probably he was the less heedful, inasmuch as he was not very carefully paid. I believe he did a great deal for the late King, with very little profit. The honour in these cases is too apt to be thought enough. Mr. West certainly kept his love for Bonaparte no secret; and it was no wonder, for the conqueror expressed an admiration of his pictures. He thought his smile enchanting, and that he had the hand-

somest leg and thigh he had ever seen. He was present when the "Venus de Medicis" was talked of, the French having just then taken possession of her. Bonaparte, Mr. West said, turned round to those about him, and said, with his eyes lit up, "She's coming!" as if he had been talking of a living person. I believe he retained for the Emperor the love that he had had for the First Consul, a wedded love, "for better, for worse." However, I believe also that he retained it after the Emperor's downfall; which is not what every painter did.

But I am getting out of my chronology. The quiet of Mr. West's gallery, the tranquil, intent beauty of the statues, and the subjects of some of the pictures, particularly Death on the Pale Horse, the Deluge, the Scotch King hunting the Stag, Moses on Mount Sinai, Christ Healing the Sick, (a sketch,) Sir Philip Sidney giving up the Water to the Dying Soldier, the Installation of the Knights of the Garter, and Ophelia before the King and Queen, (one of the best things he ever did,) made a great impression upon me. My mother and I used to go down the gallery together, as if we were treading on wool. She was in the habit of stopping to look at some of the pictures, particularly the Deluge and the Ophelia, with a countenance quite awe-stricken. She used also to point out to me the subjects relating to liberty and patriotism, and the domestic affections. Agrippina bringing home the Ashes of Germanicus was a great favourite with her. I remember, too, the awful delight afforded us by the Angel slaying the Army of Sennacherib; a bright figure lording it in the air, with a chaos of human beings below.

As Mr. West was almost sure to be found at work in the farthest room, habited in his white woollen gown, so you might have predicated, with equal certainty, that Mrs. West was sitting in the parlour reading. I used to think, that if I had such a parlour to sit in, I should do just as she did. It was a good-sized room, with two windows looking out on the little garden I spoke of, and opening to it from one of them by a flight of steps. The garden with its busts in it, and the pictures which you knew were on the other side of its wall, had an Italian look. The room was hung with engravings and coloured prints.



Among them was the *Lion's Hunt*, from Rubens; the *Hierarchy with the Godhead*, from Raphael, which I hardly thought it right to look at; and two screens by the fire-side, containing prints, from Angelica Kauffman, of the *Loves of Angelica and Medoro*, which I could have looked at from morning to night. Angelica's intent eyes, I thought, had the best of it; but I thought so without knowing why. This gave me a love for Ariosto before I knew him. I got Hoole's translation, but could make nothing of it. Angelica Kauffman seemed to me to have done much more for her namesake. She could see farther into a pair of eyes than Mr. Hoole with his spectacles. This reminds me that I could make as little of Pope's *Homer*, which a school-fellow of mine was always reading, and which I was ashamed of not being able to like. It was not that I did not admire Pope; but the words in his translation always took precedence in my mind of the things, and the unvarying sweetness of his versification tired me before I knew the reason. This did not hinder me afterwards from trying to imitate it; nor from succeeding, as every body else succeeds. It is his wit and closeness that are difficult things, and that make him what he is;—a truism, which the mistakes of critics on divers sides have made it but too warrantable to repeat.

Mrs. West and my mother used to talk of old times, and Philadelphia, and my father's prospects at court. I sat apart with a book, from which I stole glances at Angelica. I had a habit at that time of holding my breath, which forced me every now and then to take long sighs. Mrs. West would offer me a bribe not to sigh. I would earn it once or twice; but the sighs were sure to return. These wagers I did not care for; but I remember being greatly mortified when Mr. West offered me half-a-crown if I would solve the old question of "Who was the father of Zebedee's children?" and I could not tell him. He never made his appearance till dinner, and returned to his painting-room directly after it. And so at tea-time. The talk was very quiet; the neighbourhood quiet; the servants quiet; I thought the very squirrel in the cage would have made a greater noise any where else. James the porter, a fine tall fellow, who figured in his master's pic-

tures as an apostle, was as quiet as he was strong. Standing for his picture had become a sort of religion with him. Even the butler, with his little twinkling eyes, full of pleasant conceit, vented his notions of himself in half tones and whispers. This was a strange fantastic person. He got my brother Robert to take a likeness of him, small enough to be contained in a shirt pin. It was thought that his twinkling eyes, albeit not young, had some fair cynosure in the neighbourhood. What was my brother's amazement, when, the next time he saw him, the butler said with a face of enchanted satisfaction, "Well, Sir, you see!" making a movement at the same time with the frill at his waistcoat. The miniature that was to be given to the object of his affections, had been given accordingly. It was in his own bosom.

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#### EARLY FRIENDS.—FAMILY OF THE THORNTONS.

NOTWITHSTANDING my delight with the house at the West end of the town, it was not to compare with my beloved one in the City. There was quiet in the one; there were beautiful statues and pictures; and there was my Angelica for me, with her intent eyes, at the fire-side. But, besides quiet in the other, there was cordiality, and there was music, and a family brimful of hospitality and good-nature, and dear Almeria T. (now Mrs. P——e,) who in vain pretends that she is growing old, which is what she never did, shall, would, might, should, or could do. Those were indeed holidays, on which I used to go to Austin Friars. The house (such at least are my boyish recollections) was of the description I have been ever fondest of,—large, rambling, old-fashioned, solidly built, resembling the mansions about Highgate and other old villages. It was furnished as became the house of a rich merchant and a sensible man, the comfort predominating over the costliness. At the back was a garden with a lawn; and a private door opened into another garden, belonging to the Company of Drapers; so that, what with the secluded nature of the street itself, and these verdant places behind it, it was

truly *rus in urbe*, and a retreat. When I turned down the archway, I held my mother's hand tighter with pleasure, and was full of expectation, and joy, and respect. My first delight was in mounting the staircase to the rooms of the young ladies, setting my eyes on the comely and sparkling countenance of my fair friend with her romantic name, and turning over, for the hundredth time, the books in her library. What she did with the volumes of the Turkish Spy, what they meant, or what amusement she could extract from them, was an eternal mystification to me. Not long ago, meeting with a copy of the book accidentally, I pounced upon my old acquaintance, and found him to contain better and more amusing stuff than people would suspect from his dry look and his obsolete politics.\* The face of tenderness and respect with which A——used to welcome my mother, springing forward with her fine buxom figure to supply the strength which the other wanted, and showing what an equality of love there may be between youth and middle-age, and rich and poor, I should never cease to love her for, had she not been, as she was, one of the best-natured persons in the world in every thing. I have not seen her now for many years; but with that same face, whatever change she may pretend to find it, she will go to Heaven; for it is the face of her spirit. A good heart never grows old.

Of George T——, her brother, who will pardon this omission of his worldly titles, whatever they may be, I have a similar kind of recollection, in its proportion; for, though we knew him thoroughly, we saw him less. The sight of his face was an additional sunshine to my holiday. He was very generous and handsome-minded; a genuine human being. Mrs. T——, the mother, a very lady-like woman, in a delicate state of health, we usually found reclining on a sofa, always ailing, but always with a smile for us. The father, a man of a large

\* The Turkish Spy is a sort of philosophical newspaper in volumes; and, under a mask of bigotry, speculates very freely on all subjects. It is said to have been written by an Italian Jesuit of the name of Marana. The first volume has been attributed, however, to Sir Roger Manley, father of the author of the *Atalantis*; and the rest to Dr. Midgeley, a friend of his.



habit of body, panting with asthma, whom we seldom saw but at dinner, treated us with all the family delicacy, and would have me come and sit next him, which I did with a mixture of joy and dread; for it was painful to hear him breathe. I dwell the more upon these attentions, because the school that I was in held a sort of equivocal rank in point of what is called respectability; and it was no less an honour to another, than to ourselves, to know when to place us upon a liberal footing. Young as I was, I felt this point strongly; and was touched with as grateful a tenderness towards those who treated me handsomely, as I retreated inwardly upon a proud consciousness of my Greek and Latin, when the supercilious would have humbled me. Blessed house! May a blessing be upon your rooms, and your lawn, and your neighbouring garden, and the quiet old monastic name of your street! and may it never be a thoroughfare! and may all your inmates be happy! Would to God one could renew, at a moment's notice, the happy hours we have enjoyed in past times, with the same circles, and in the same houses! A planet with such a privilege would be a great lift nearer Heaven. What prodigious evenings, reader, we would have of it! What fine pieces of childhood, of youth, of manhood—ay, and of age, as long as our friends lasted! The old gentleman in *Gil Blas*, who complained that the peaches were not so fine as they used to be when he was young, had more reason than appears on the face of it. He missed not only his former palate, but the places he ate them in, and those who ate them with him. I have been told, that the cranberries I have met with since must be as fine as those I got with the T.'s; as large and as juicy; and that they came from the same place. For all that, I never ate a cranberry-tart since I dined in Austin-Friars.

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FAMILY PORTRAITS RESUMED.—MORE WEST INDIANS.—  
A SCHOOL-BOY'S FIRST LOVE.

I SHOULD have fallen in love with A. T.; had I been

old enough. As it was, my first flame, or my first notion of a flame, which is the same thing in those days, was for my giddy cousin Fan, a quicksilver West Indian. Her mother, the aunt I spoke of, had just come from Barbadoes with her two daughters and a sister. She was a woman of a princely spirit; and having a good property, and every wish to make her relations more comfortable, she did so. It became holiday with us all. My mother raised her head; my father grew young again; my cousin Kate conceived a regard for one of my brothers, and married him; and for my part, besides my pictures and Italian garden at Mr. West's, and my beloved old English house in Austin Friars, I had now another paradise in Great Ormond Street. My aunt had something of the West Indian pride, but all in a good spirit, and was a mighty cultivator of the gentilities, inward as well as outward. I did not dare to appear before her with dirty hands, she would have rebuked me so handsomely. For some reason or other, the marriage of my brother and his cousin was kept secret a little while. I became acquainted with it by chance, coming in upon a holiday, the day the ceremony took place. Instead of keeping me out of the secret by a trick, they very wisely resolved upon trusting me with it, and relying upon my honour. My honour happened to be put to the test, and I came off with flying colours. It is to this circumstance I trace the religious idea I have ever since entertained of keeping a secret. I went with the bride and bridegroom to church, and remember kneeling apart and weeping bitterly. My tears were unaccountable to me then. Doubtless they were owing to an instinctive sense of the great change that was taking place in the lives of two human beings, and of the unalterableness of the engagement. Death and Life seem to come together on these occasions, like awful guests at a feast, and look one another in the face.

It was not with such good effect that my aunt raised my notions of a school-boy's pocket money to half-crowns, and crowns and half-guineas. My father and mother were both as generous as daylight; but they could not give what they had not. I had been unused to spending, and accordingly I spent with a vengeance. I remember a

ludicrous instance. The first half-guinea that I received brought about me a consultation of companions to know how to get rid of it. One shilling was devoted to pears, another to apples, another to cakes, and so on, all to be bought immediately, as they were; till coming to the sixpence, and being struck with a recollection that I ought to do something useful with that, I bought six-penn'orth of shoe-strings: these, no doubt, vanished like the rest. The next half-guinea came to the knowledge of the master: he interfered, which was one of his proper actions; and my aunt practised more self-denial in future.

Our new family from abroad were true West Indians, or, as they would have phrased it, "true Barbadians born." they were generous, warm-tempered, had great good-nature; were proud, but not unpleasantly so; lively, yet indolent; temperately epicurean in their diet; fond of company, and dancing, and music; and lovers of show, but far from withholding the substance. I speak chiefly of the mother and daughters. My other aunt, an elderly maiden, who piqued herself on the delicacy of her hands and ankles, and made you understand how many suitors she had refused (for which she expressed any thing but repentance, being extremely vexed,) was not deficient in complexional good-nature; but she was narrow-minded, and seemed to care for nothing in the world but two things; first, for her elder niece Kate, whom she had helped to nurse; and second, for a becoming set-out of coffee and buttered toast, particularly of a morning, when it was taken up to her in bed, with a salver and other necessities of life. Yes; there was one more indispensable thing,—slavery. It was frightful to hear her small mouth and little mincing tones assert the necessity not only of slaves, but of robust corporal punishment to keep them to their duty. But she did this, because her want of ideas could do no otherwise. Having had slaves, she wondered how any body could object to so natural and lady-like an establishment. Late in life, she took to fancying that every polite old gentleman was in love with her; and thus she lived on, till her dying moment, in a flutter of expectation.

The black servant must have puzzled this aunt of



mine sometimes. All the wonder of which she was capable, he certainly must have roused, not without "a quaver of consternation." This man had come over with them from the West Indies. He was a slave on my aunt's estate, and as such demeaned himself, till he learnt that there was no such thing as a slave in England; that the moment a man sets his foot on English ground he was free. I cannot help smiling to think of the bewildered astonishment into which his first over-act, in consequence of this knowledge must have put my poor aunt Courthope (for that was her Christian name.) Most likely it broke out in the shape of some remonstrances about his fellow-servant. He partook of the pride common to all the Barbadians, black as well as white; and the maid-servants tormented him. I remember his coming up in the parlour one day, and making a ludicrous representation of the affronts put upon his office and person, interspersing his chattering and gesticulations with explanatory dumb show. One of them was a pretty girl, who had manœuvred till she got him stuck in a corner; and he insisted upon telling us all that she said and did. His respect for himself had naturally increased since he became free; but he did not know what to do with it. Poor Samuel was not ungenerous, after his fashion. He also wished, with his freedom, to acquire a freeman's knowledge, but stuck fast at pothooks and hangers. To frame a written B he pronounced a thing impossible. Of his powers on the violin he made us more sensible, not without frequent remonstrances, which it must have taken all my aunt's good nature to make her repeat. He had left two wives in Barbadoes, one of whom was brought to-bed of a son a little after he came away. For this son he wanted a name, that was to be new, sounding and long. They referred him to the reader of Homer and Virgil. With classical names he was well acquainted, Mars and Venus being among his most intimate friends, besides Jupiters and Adonises, and Dianas with large families. At length we succeeded with Neoptolemus. He said he had never heard it before; and he made me write it for him in a great text hand, that there might be no mistake.

My aunt took a country house at Merton, in Surrey,

where I passed three of the happiest weeks of my life. It was the custom at our school, in those days, to allow us only one set of unbroken holidays during the whole time we were there,—I mean, holidays in which we remained away from school by night as well as by day. The period was always in August. Imagine a school-boy passionately fond of the green fields, who had never slept out of the heart of the city for years. It was a compensation even for the pang of leaving my friend; and then what letters I would write to him! And what letters I did write! What full measure of affection, pressed down and running over! I read, walked, had a garden and orchard to run in; and fields that I could have rolled in, to have my will of them. My father accompanied me to Wimbledon to see Horne Tooke, who patted me on the head. I felt very differently under his hand, and under that of the Bishop of London, when he confirmed a crowd of us in St. Paul's. Not that I thought of politics, though I had a sense of his being a patriot; but patriotism, as well as every thing else was connected in my mind with something classical, and Horne Tooke held his political reputation with me by the same tenure that he held his fame for learning and grammatical knowledge. "The learned Horne Tooke" was the designation by which I styled him in some verses I wrote; in which verses, by the way, with a poetical license which would have been thought more classical by Queen Elizabeth than my master, I called my aunt a "nymph." In the ceremony of confirmation by the Bishop, there was something too official, and like a despatch of business, to excite my veneration. My head only anticipated the coming of his hand, with a thrill in the scalp: and when it came, it tickled me. My cousins had the celebrated Dr. Callcott for a music-master. The Doctor, who was a scholar and a great reader, was so pleased with me one day for being able to translate the beginning of Xenophon's *Anabasis*, (one of our school-books,) that he took me out with him to Nunn's, the bookseller's in Great Queen Street, and made me a present of "*Schrevelius's Lexicon*." When he came down to Merton, he let me ride his horse. What days were those! Instead of being roused against my will by a bell, I jumped up with

the lark, and strolled "out of bounds." Instead of bread and water for breakfast, I had coffee and tea, and buttered toast: for dinner, not a hunk of bread and a modicum of hard meat, or a bowl of pretended broth, but fish, and fowl, and noble hot joints, and puddings, and sweets, and Guava jellies, and other West Indian mysteries of peppers and preserves, and wine: and then I had tea; and I sat up to supper like a man, and lived so well, that I might have been very ill, had I not run about all the rest of the day. My strolls about the fields with a book were full of happiness: only my dress used to get me stared at by the villagers. Walking one day by the little river Wandle, I came upon one of the loveliest girls I ever beheld, standing in the water with bare legs, washing some linen. She turned, as she was stooping, and showed a blooming oval face with blue eyes, on either side of which flowed a profusion of flaxen locks. With the exception of the colour of the hair, it was like Raphael's own head turned into a peasant girl's. The eyes were full of gentle astonishment at the sight of me; and mine must have wondered no less. However, I was prepared for such wonders. It was only one of my poetical visions realized, and I expected to find the world full of them. What she thought of my blue skirts and yellow stockings, is not so clear. She did not, however, haunt me with my "petticoat," as the girls in the streets of London would do, making me blush, as I thought they ought to have done instead. My beauty in the brook was too gentle and diffident: at least I thought so, and my own heart did not contradict me. I then took every beauty for an Arcadian, and every brook for a fairy stream; and the reader would be surprised, if he knew to what an extent I have a similar tendency still. I find the same possibilities by another path.

I do not remember whether an Abbé Paris, who taught my cousins French, used to see them in the country; but I never shall forget him in Ormond Street. He was an emigrant, very gentlemanly, with a face of remarkable benignity, and a voice that became it. He spoke English in a slow manner, that was very graceful. I shall never forget his saying one day, in answer to somebody who pressed him on the subject, and in the mild-



est of tones, that without doubt it was impossible to be saved out of the pale of the Catholic Church. This made a strong impression upon me. One contrast of this sort reminds me of another. My aunt Courthope had something growing out on one of her knuckles, which she was afraid to let a surgeon look at. There was a Dr. Chapman, a West India physician, who came to see us, a person of great suavity of manners, with all that air of languor and want of energy which the West Indians often exhibit. He was in the habit of inquiring, with the softest voice in the world, how my aunt's hand was; and coming one day upon us in the midst of dinner, and sighing forth his usual question, she gave it him over her shoulder to look at. In a moment she shrieked, and the swelling was gone. The meekest of doctors had done it away with his lancet.

I had no draw-back on my felicity at Merton, with the exception of an occasional pang at my friend's absence, and a new vexation that surprised and mortified me. I had been accustomed at school to sleep with sixty boys in the room, and some old night-fears that used to haunt me were forgotten. No manticoras there!—no old men crawling on the floor! What was my chagrin, when on sleeping alone, after so long a period, I found my terrors come back again!—not, indeed, in all the same shapes. Beasts could frighten me no longer; but I was at the mercy of any other ghostly fiction that I presented to my mind crawling or ramping. I struggled hard to say nothing about it; but my days began to be discoloured with fear of my nights; and with unutterable humiliation I begged that the footman might be allowed to sleep in the same room. Luckily, my request was attended to in the kindest and most reconciling manner. I was pitied for my fears, but praised for my candour—a balance of qualities, which I have reason to believe, did me a service far beyond that of the moment. Samuel, who, fortunately for my shame, had a great respect for fear of this kind, had his bed removed accordingly into my room. He used to entertain me at night with stories of Barbadoes and the negroes; and in a few days I was reassured and happy.

It was then (Oh shame that I must speak of fair lady

after confessing a heart so faint!)—it was then that I fell in love with my cousin Fan. However, I would have fought all her young acquaintances round for her, timid as I was, and little inclined to pugnacity.

Fanny was a lass of fifteen, with little laughing eyes, and a mouth like a plum. I was then (I feel as if I ought to be ashamed to say it) not more than thirteen, if so old; but I had read Tooke's Pantheon, and came of a precocious race. My cousin came of one too, and was about to be married to a handsome young fellow of three-and-twenty. I thought nothing of this, for nothing could be more innocent than my intentions. I was not old enough, or grudging enough, or whatever it was, even to be jealous. I thought every body must love Fanny D——; and if she did not leave me out in permitting it, I was satisfied. It was enough for me to be with her as long as I could; to gaze on her with delight, as she floated hither and thither; and to sit on the stiles in the neighbouring fields, thinking of Tooke's Pantheon. My friendship was greater than my love. Had my favourite school-fellow been ill, or otherwise demanded my return, I should certainly have chosen his society in preference. Three-fourths of my heart were devoted to friendship; the rest was in a vague dream of beauty, and female cousins, and nymphs, and green fields, and a feeling which, though of a warm nature, was full of fear and respect. Had the jade put me on the least equality of footing as to age, I know not what change might have been wrought in me; but though too young herself for the serious duties she was about to bring on her, and full of sufficient levity and gaiety not to be uninterested with the little black-eyed school-boy that lingered about her, my vanity was well paid off by hers, for she kept me at a distance by calling me *petit garçon*. This was no better than the assumption of an elder sister in her teens over a younger one; but the latter feels it, nevertheless; and I persuaded myself that it was particularly cruel. I wished the Abbé Paris at Jamaica with his French. There would she come, in her frock and tucker, (for she had not yet left off either,) her curls dancing, and her hands clasped together in the enthusiasm of something to tell me, and when I flew to

meet her, forgetting the difference of ages, and alive only to my charming cousin, she would repress me with a little fillip on the cheek, and say, "Well, *petit garçon*, what do you think of that?" The worst of it was, that this odious French phrase sat insufferably well upon her plump little mouth. She and I used to gather peaches before the house were up. I held the ladder for her; she mounted like a fairy, and when I stood doating on her, as she looked down and threw the fruit in my lap, she would cry, "*Petit garçon*, you will let 'em all drop!" On my return to school, she gave me a locket for a keepsake, in the shape of a heart; which was the worst thing she ever did to the *petit garçon*, for it touched me on my weak side, and looked like a sentiment. I believe I should have had serious thoughts of becoming melancholy, had I not, in returning to school, returned to my friend, and so found means to occupy my craving for sympathy. However, I wore the heart a long while. I have sometimes thought there was more in her French than I imagined; but I believe not. She naturally took herself for double my age, with a lover of three-and-twenty. Soon after her marriage, fortune separated us for many years. My passion had almost as soon died away; but I have loved the name of Fanny ever since; and when I met her again, which was under circumstances of trouble on her part, I could not see her without such an emotion as I was fain to confess to a person "near and dear," who forgave me for it, which is one of the reasons I have for loving the said person so well. Yes; the black ox trod on the fairy foot of my light-hearted cousin Fan.; of her whom I could no more have thought of in conjunction with sorrow, than of a ball-room with a tragedy. To know that she was rich, and admired, and abounding in mirth and music, was to me the same thing as to know that she existed. How often have I wished myself rich in turn, that I might have restored her to all the graces of life! She is generous, and would not have grudged me the satisfaction.



A SCHOOL-MASTER OF THE OLD LEAVEN: WITH AN  
ACCOUNT OF CHRIST-HOSPITAL.

To describe so well-known a school as Christ-Hospital, would to thousands of readers be superfluous; but to such as are unacquainted with the City, or with a certain track of reading, it still remains a curiosity. Thousands, indeed, have gone through the City and never suspected that in the heart of it lies an old cloistered foundation, where a boy may grow up, as I did, among six hundred others, and know as little of the very neighbourhood as the world does of him.

But it is highly interesting on other accounts. Perhaps there is not a foundation in the country so truly English, taking that word to mean what Englishmen wish it to mean;—something solid, unpretending, of good character, and free to all. More boys are to be found in it, who issue from a greater variety of ranks, than in any other school in the kingdom; and as it is the most various, so it is the largest, of all the free-schools. Nobility do not go there, except as boarders. Now and then, a boy of a noble family may be met with, and he is reckoned an interloper, and against the charter; but the sons of poor gentry and London citizens abound; and with them, an equal share is given to the sons of tradesmen of the very humblest description, not omitting servants. I would not take my oath,—but I have a very vivid recollection, that in my time there were two boys, one of whom went up into the drawing-room to his father, the master of the house; and the other, down into the kitchen to *his* father, the coachman. One thing, however, I know to be certain, and that is the noblest of all; it is, that the boys themselves, (at least it was so in my time,) had no sort of feeling of the difference of one another's ranks out of doors. The cleverest boy was the noblest, let his father be who he might. In short, Christ-Hospital is well known and respected by thousands, as a nursery of tradesmen, of merchants, of naval officers, of scholars, of some of the most emi-

nent persons of the day; and the feeling among the boys themselves is, that it is a medium, far apart indeed, but equally so, between the patrician pretensions of such schools as Eton and Westminster, and the plebeian submission of the charity schools. In point of University honours, it claims to be equal with the greatest; and though other schools can show a greater abundance of eminent names, I know not where will be many who are a greater host in themselves. One original author is worth a hundred transwriters of elegance: and such a one is to be found in Richardson, who here received what education he possessed. Here Camden also received the rudiments of his. Bishop Stillingfleet, according to the *Memoirs of Pepys*, lately published, was brought up in the school. We have had many eminent scholars, two of them Greek Professors, to wit, Barnes, and the present Mr. Scholefield, the latter of whom attained an extraordinary succession of University honours. The rest are Markland; Dr. Middleton, late Bishop of Calcutta; and Mr. Mitchell, the translator of "*Aristophanes*." Christ-Hospital, I believe, has sent out more living writers, in its proportion, than any other school. There is Dr. Richards, author of the "*Aboriginal Britons*;" Dyer, whose life has been one unbroken dream of learning and goodness, and who used to make us wonder with passing through the school-room (where no other person in "town-clothes" ever appeared) to consult books in the library; Le Grice, the translator of "*Longus*;" Horne, author of some well-known productions in controversial divinity; Surr, the novelist, (not in the Grammar school;) James White, the friend of Charles Lamb, and not unworthy of him, author of "*Falstaff's Letters*:" (this was he who used to give an anniversary dinner to the chimney-sweepers, merrier, though not so magnificent as Mrs. Montagu's.) Pitman, a celebrated preacher, editor of some school-books, and religious classics; Mitchell, before mentioned; myself, who stood next him; Barnes, who came next, the Editor of the *Times*, (than whom no man (if he had cared for it) could have been more certain of attaining celebrity for wit and literature;) Townsend, a prebendary of Durham, author of "*Armageddon*," and several theological

works; Gilly, another of the Durham prebendaries, who wrote the other day the "Narrative of the Waldenses;" Scargill, a Unitarian minister, author of some tracts on Peace and War, &c.; and lastly, whom I have kept by way of climax, Coleridge, and Charles Lamb, two of the most original geniuses, not only of the day, but of the country. We have had an ambassador among us; but as he, I understand, is ashamed of us, we are hereby more ashamed of him, and accordingly omit him.

In the time of Henry the Eighth, Christ-Hospital was a monastery of Franciscan Friars. Being dissolved among the others, Edward the Sixth, moved by a sermon of Bishop Ridley's, assigned the revenues of it to the maintenance and education of a certain number of poor orphan children, born of citizens of London. I believe there has been no law passed to alter the letter of this intention; which is a pity, since the alteration has taken place. An extension of it was probably very good, and even demanded by circumstances. I have reason, for one, to be grateful for it. But tampering with matters-of-fact among children is dangerous. They soon learn to distinguish between allowed poetical fiction, and that, which they are told, under severe penalties, never to be guilty of; and this early sample of contradiction between the thing asserted and the obvious fact, can do no good even in an establishment so plain-dealing in other respects, as Christ-hospital. The place is not only designated as an Orphan-house in its Latin title, but the boys, in the prayers which they repeat every day, implore the pity of Heaven upon "us poor orphans." I remember the perplexity this caused me at a very early period. It is true, the word orphan may be used in a sense implying destitution of any sort; but this was not its original meaning in the present instance; nor do the younger boys give it the benefit of that scholarly interpretation. There was another thing, (now, I believe, done away,) which existed in my time, and perplexed me still more. It seemed a glaring instance of the practice likely to result from the other assumption, and made me prepare for a hundred falsehoods and deceptions, which mixed up with contradiction, as most things in society are, I sometimes did find and oftener dreaded. I



allude to a foolish custom they had, in the ward which I first entered, and which was the only one that the company at the public suppers were in the habit of going into, of hanging up, by the side of every bed, a clean white napkin, which was supposed to be the one used by the occupiers. Now these napkins were only for show, the real towels being of the largest and coarsest kind. If the masters had been asked about them, they would doubtless have told the truth; perhaps the nurses would have done so. But the boys were not aware of this. There they saw these "white lies" hanging before them, a conscious imposition; and I well remember how alarmed I used to feel, lest any of the company should direct their inquiries to me.

Speaking of "wards" and "nurses," I must enter into a more particular account of the school. Christ-Hospital (for this is its proper name, and not Christ's Hospital) occupies a considerable portion of ground between Newgate Street, Giltspur Street, St. Bartholomew's, and Little Britain. There is a quadrangle with four cloisters, a cloister running out of these to the Sick Ward; a portico supporting the Writing School; a kind of street, with the counting-house, and some other houses; and a large open space, presenting the Grammar School. The square inside the cloisters is called the Garden, and most likely was the monastery garden. Its only delicious crop, for many years, has been pavement. The large area is also misnomered the Ditch; the town-ditch, I suppose, having formerly had a tributary stream that way. One side of the quadrangle is occupied by the Hall, or eating-room, one of the noblest in England, adorned with enormously long paintings by Verrio and others, and with an organ. Another side contained the library of the monks, and was built or repaired by the famous Whittington, whose arms are still to be seen outside.

In the cloisters a number of persons lie buried, besides the officers of the house. Among them is Isabella, wife of Edward the Second, the "she-wolf of France." I was not aware of this circumstance then; but many a time, with a recollection of some lines in "Blair's Grave" upon me, have I ran as hard as I could at night-

time from my ward to another, in order to borrow the next volume of some ghostly romance. In one of the cloisters was an impression resembling a gigantic foot, which was attributed by some to the angry stamping of the ghost of a beadle's wife! A beadle was a higher sound to us than to most, as it involved ideas of detected apples in church-time, "skulking" (as it was called) out of bounds, and a power of reporting us to the masters. But fear does not stand upon rank and ceremony.

The wards, or sleeping-rooms, are twelve, and contained, in my time rows of beds on each side, partitioned off, but connected with one another, and each having two boys to sleep in it. Down the middle ran the binns for holding bread and other things, and serving for a table when the meal was not taken in the hall; and over the binns hung a great homely chandelier.

To each of these wards a nurse was assigned, who was the widow of some decent livery-man of London, and who had the charge of looking after us at night-time, seeing to our washing, &c. and carving for us at dinner: all which gave her a good deal of power, more than her name warranted. They were, however, almost invariably very decent people, and performed their duty; which was not always the case with the young ladies, their daughters. There were five schools; a grammar-school, a mathematical or navigation-school (added by Charles the Second,) a writing, a drawing, and a reading-school. Those who could not read when they came on the foundation, went into the last. There were few in the last-but-one, and I scarcely know what they did, or for what object. The writing-school was for those who were intended for trade and commerce; the mathematical for boys who went as midshipmen into the naval and East India service; and the grammar-school for such as were designed for the Church, and to go to the University. The writing-school was by far the largest; and, what is very curious, (which is not the case now,) all these schools were kept quite distinct, so that a boy might arrive at the age of fifteen in the grammar-school, and not know his multiplication-table. But more of this, on a future occasion. Most of these schools had several masters; besides whom there was a steward, who took care of our subsistence,

and had a general superintendence over all hours and circumstances not connected with schooling. The masters had almost all been in the school, and might expect pensions or livings in their old age. Among those, in my time, the mathematical master was Mr. Wales, a man well known for his science, who had been round the world with Captain Cook; for which we highly venerated him. He was a good man, of plain simple manners, with a heavy large person and a benign countenance. When he was in Otaheite, the natives played him a trick while bathing, and stole his small-clothes; which we used to think an enormous liberty, scarcely credible. The name of the steward, a thin stiff man of invincible formality of demeanour, admirably fitted to render encroachment impossible, was Hathaway. We of the grammar-school used to call him "the Yeoman," on account of Shakspeare's having married the daughter of a man of that name, designated as "a substantial yeoman."

Our dress was of the coarsest and quaintest kind, but was respected out of doors, and is so. It consisted of a blue druggat gown, or body, with ample coats to it; a yellow vest underneath in winter-time; small-clothes of Russia duck; yellow stockings; a leathern girdle; and a little black worsted cap, usually carried in the hand. I believe it was the ordinary dress of children in humble life, during the reign of the Tudors. We used to flatter ourselves that it was taken from the monks; and there went a monstrous tradition, that at one period it consisted of blue velvet with silver buttons. It was said also, that during the blissful era of the blue velvet we had roast mutton for supper; but that the small-clothes not being then in existence, and the mutton suppers too luxurious, the eatables were given up for the ineffables.

A malediction, at heart, always followed the memory of him who had taken upon himself to decide so preposterously. To say the truth, we were not too well fed at that time either in quantity or quality; and we could not enter with our then hungry imaginations into those remote philosophies. Our breakfast was bread and water, for the beer was too bad to drink. The bread consisted of the half of a three-halfpenny loaf, according to the prices then cur-



rent. I suppose it would now be a good penny-one; certainly not a three-penny. This was not much for growing boys, who had nothing to eat from six or seven o'clock the preceding evening. For dinner, we had the same quantity of bread, with meat every other day, and that consisting of a small slice, such as would be given to an infant of three or four years old. Yet even that, with all our hunger, we very often left half-eaten; the meat was so tough. On the other days, we had a milk-porridge, ludicrously thin; or rice-milk, which was better. There were no vegetables or puddings. Once a month we had roast-beef; and twice a year, (I blush to think of the eagerness with which it was looked for!) a dinner of pork. One was roast, and the other boiled; and on the latter occasion we had our only pudding which was of pease. I blush to remember this, not on account of our poverty, but on account of the sordidness of the custom. There had much better have been none. For supper we had a like piece of bread, with butter or cheese; and then to bed, "with what appetite we might."

Our routine of life was this. We rose to the call of a bell, at six in summer, and seven in winter; and after combing ourselves, and washing our hands and faces, went, at the call of another bell, to breakfast. All this took up about an hour. From breakfast we proceeded to school, where we remained till eleven, winter and summer, and then had an hour's play. Dinner took place at twelve. Afterwards was a little play till one, when we again went to school, and remained till five in summer and four in winter. At six was the supper. We used to play after it in summer till eight. In winter we proceeded from supper to bed. On Sundays, the school-time of the other days was occupied with church, both morning and evening; and as the Bible was read to us every day before every meal, and on going to bed, besides prayers and graces, we at least rivalled the monks in the religious part of our duties. The effect was certainly not what was intended. The Bible perhaps was read thus frequently in the first instance, out of contradiction to the papal spirit that had so long kept it locked up; but, in the eighteenth century, the repetition was not so desirable among a parcel of hungry boys, anxious

to get their modicum to eat. On Sunday, what with the long service in the morning, the service again after dinner, and the inaudible and indifferent tones of some of the preachers, it was unequivocally tiresome. I, for one, who had been piously brought up, and continued to have religion inculcated on me by father and mother, began secretly to become as indifferent as I thought the preachers; and, though the morals of the school were in the main excellent and exemplary, we all felt instinctively, without knowing it, that it was the orderliness and example of the general system that kept us so, and not the religious part of it; which seldom entered our heads at all, and only tired us when it did. I am not begging any question here, or speaking for or against. I am only stating a fact. Others may argue, that however superfluous the readings and prayers might have been, a good general spirit of religion must have been inculcated, because a great deal of virtue and religious charity is known to have issued out of that school, and no fanaticism. I shall not dispute the point. The case is true; but not the less true is what I speak of. Latterly there came, as our parish clergyman, Mr. Crowther, a nephew of the celebrated Richardson, and worthy of the talents and virtues of his kinsman, though inclining to a mode of faith which is supposed to produce more faith than charity. But, till then, the persons who were in the habit of getting up in our church pulpit and reading-desk, might as well have hummed a tune to their diaphragms. They inspired us with nothing but mimicry. The name of the morning-reader was Salt. He was a worthy man, I believe, and might, for aught we knew, have been a clever one; but he had it all to himself. He spoke in his throat with a sound as if he was weak and corpulent; and was famous among us for saying "Murracles" instead of "Miracles." When we imitated him, this was the only word we drew upon: the rest was unintelligible suffocation. Our usual evening preacher was Mr. Sandiford, who had the reputation of learning and piety. It was of no use to us, except to make us associate the ideas of learning and piety in the pulpit with inaudible humdrum. Mr. Sandiford's voice was hollow and low, and he had a habit of dipping up and down over his book,

like a chicken drinking. Mr. Salt was eminent with us for a single word. Mr. Sandiford surpassed him, for he had two famous audible phrases. There was, it is true, no great variety in them. One was "the dispensation of Moses:" the other (with a due interval of hum,) "the Mosaic dispensation." These he used to repeat so often, that in our caricatures of him they sufficed for an entire portrait. The reader may conceive a large church, (it was Christ Church, Newgate Street,) with six hundred boys, seated like charity-children up in the air, on each side the organ, Mr. Sandiford humming in the valley, and a few maid-servants who formed his afternoon congregation. We did not dare to go to sleep. We were not allowed to read. The great boys used to get those that sat behind them to play with their hair. Some whispered to their neighbours, and the others thought of their lessons and tops. I can safely say, that many of us would have been good listeners, and most of us attentive ones, if the clergyman could have been heard: as it was, I talked as well as the rest, or thought of my exercise. Sometimes we could not help joking and laughing over our weariness; and then the fear was, lest the steward had seen us. It was part of the business of the steward to preside over the boys in church-time. He sat aloof, in a place where he could view the whole of his flock. There was a ludicrous kind of revenge we had of him, whenever a particular part of the Bible was read. This was the parable of the Unjust Steward. The boys waited anxiously till the passage commenced; and then, as if by a general conspiracy, at the words, "thou unjust steward," the whole school turned their eyes upon this unfortunate officer, who sat

"Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved."

We persuaded ourselves, that the more unconscious he looked, the more he was acting. By a singular chance, there were two clergymen, occasional preachers in our pulpit, who were as loud and startling, as the others were somniferous. One of them, with a sort of flat, high voice, had a remarkable way of making a ladder of it, climbing higher and higher to the end of the sen-



tence. It ought to be described by the gamut, or written up-hill. Perhaps it was an association of ideas that has made us recollect one particular passage. It is where Ahab consults the Prophets, asking them whether he shall go up to Ramoth Gilead to battle. "Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? and they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." He used to give this out in such a manner, that you might have fancied him climbing out of the pulpit, sword in hand. The other was a tall, thin man, with a noble voice. He would commence a prayer in a most stately and imposing manner, full both of dignity and feeling; and then, as if tired of it, hurry over all the rest. Indeed, he began every prayer in this way, and was as sure to hurry it; for which reason, the boys hailed the sight of him, as they knew they should get sooner out of church. When he commenced, in his noble style, the band seemed to tremble against his throat, as though it had been a sounding-board.

Being able to read, and knowing a little Latin, I was put at once into the Under Grammar School. How much time I wasted there in learning the accidence and syntax, I cannot say; but it seems to me a long while. My grammar seemed always to open at the same place. Things are managed differently now, I believe, in this as well as in a great many other respects. Great improvements have been made in the whole establishment. The boys feed better, learn better, and have longer holidays in the country. In my time, they never slept out of the school but on one occasion, during the whole of their stay; this was for three weeks in summer-time, which I have spoken of, and which they were bound to pass at a certain distance from London. They now have these holidays with a reasonable frequency; and they all go to the different schools, instead of being confined, as they were then, some to nothing but writing and cyphering, and some to the languages. It has been doubted by some of us elders, whether this system will beget such temperate, proper students, with pale faces, as the other did. I dare say, our successors are not afraid of us. I had the pleasure, not long since, of dining in company with a

Deputy Grecian, who, with a stout rosy-faced person, had not failed to acquire the scholarly turn for joking, which is common to a classical education; as well as those simple, becoming manners, made up of modesty and proper confidence, which have been often remarked as distinguishing the boys on this foundation.

“But what is a Deputy Grecian?” Ah, reader! to ask that question, and at the same time to know any thing at all worth knowing, would at one time, according to our notions have been impossible. When I entered the school, I was shown three gigantic boys, young men rather, (for the eldest was between seventeen and eighteen,) who, I was told, were going to the University. These were the Grecians. They are the three head boys of the Grammar School, and are understood to have their destiny fixed for the Church. The next class to these, and like a College of Cardinals to those three Popes, (for every Grecian was in our eyes infallible,) are the Deputy Grecians. The former were supposed to have completed their Greek studies, and were deep in Sophocles and Euripides. The latter were thought equally competent to tell you any thing respecting Homer and Demosthenes. These two classes and the head boys of the Navigation School, held a certain rank over the whole place, both in school and out. Indeed, the whole of the Navigation School, upon the strength of cultivating their valour for the navy, and being called the King’s Boys, had succeeded in establishing an extraordinary pretension to respect. This they sustained in a manner as laughable to call to mind, as it was grave in its reception. It was an etiquette among them never to move out of a right line as they walked, whoever stood in their way. I believe there was a secret understanding with Grecians and Deputy Grecians, the former of whom were unquestionably lords paramount in point of fact, and stood and walked aloof when all the rest of the school were marshalled in bodies. I do not remember any clashing between these great civil and naval powers; but I remember well my astonishment when I first beheld some of my little comrades overthrown by the progress of one of these very straightforward personages, who walked on with as tranquil and unconscious a face, as if nothing had happened. It was

not a fierce-looking push; there seemed to be no intention in it. The insolence lay in the boy's appearing not to know that such an inferior human being existed. It was always thus, wherever they came. If aware, the boys got out of their way; if not, down they went, one or more; away rolled the top or the marbles, and on walked the future captain—

In maiden navigation, frank and free.

They wore a badge on the shoulder, of which they were very proud, though in the streets it must have helped to confound them with charity boys. For charity boys, I must own, we all had a great contempt, or thought so. We did not dare to know that there might have been a little jealousy of our own position in it, placed as we were midway between the homeliness of the common charity school and the dignity of the foundations. We called them "*chizzy-wags*," and had a particular scorn and hatred of their nasal tone in singing.

The under grammar-master was the Reverend Mr. Field. He was a good-looking man, very gentlemanly, and always drest at the neatest. I believe he once wrote a play. He had the reputation of being admired by the ladies. A man of a more handsome incompetence for his situation perhaps did not exist. He came late of a morning; went away soon in the afternoon; and used to walk up and down, languidly bearing his cane, as if it was a lily, and hearing our eternal *Dominuses* and *As in præsentis* with an air of ineffable endurance. Often, he did not hear at all. It was a joke with us, when any of our friends came to the door and we asked his permission to go to them, to address him with some preposterous question, wide of the mark; to which he used to assent. We would say, for instance, "Are you not a great fool, sir?" or "Isn't your daughter a pretty girl?" to which he would reply, "Yes, child." When he condescended to hit us with the cane, he made a face as if he was taking physic. Miss Field, an agreeable-looking girl, was one of the goddesses of the school; as far above us, as if she had lived on Olympus. Another was Miss Patrick, daughter of the lamp-manufacturer in Newgate Street. I do not remember her face so well, not seeing it so often;



but she abounded in admirers. I write the names of these ladies at full length, because there is nothing that should hinder their being pleased at having caused us so many agreeable visions. We used to identify them with the picture of Venus in Tooke's Pantheon.

School was a newer scene to me than most boys: it was also a more startling one. I was not prepared for so great a multitude; for the absence of the tranquillity and security of home; nor for those exhibitions of strange characters, conflicting wills, and violent, and, as they appeared to me, wicked passions, which were to be found, in little, in this epitome of the great world. I was confused frightened, and made solitary. My mother, as I have observed before, little thought how timid she had helped to render her son, in spite of those more refined theories of courage and patriotic sentiments which she had planted in him.

I will not mention the name of the other master, the upper one, who I am now about to speak of, and whom I have designated at the head of this paper as a school-master of the old leaven. I will avoid it, not because I can thus render it unknown, but because it will remain less known than it would otherwise. I will avoid it also, because he was a conscientious man in some things, and undoubtedly more mistaken than malignant; and last, not least, because there may be inheritors of his name, whose natures, modified by other sources, and not liable to the same objections, might be hurt in proportion to their superiority.

He was a short stout man, inclining to punchiness, with large face and hands, and aquiline nose, long upper lip, and a sharp mouth. His eye was close and cruel. The spectacles threw a balm over it. Being a clergyman, he dressed in black, with a powdered wig. His clothes were cut short; his hands hung out of the sleeves, with tight wristbands, as if ready for execution, and as he generally wore grey worsted stockings, very tight, with a little balustrade leg, his whole appearance presented something formidably succinct, hard, and mechanical. In fact, his weak side, and undoubtedly his natural destination, lay in carpentry; and he accordingly carried, in a side-pocket made on purpose, a carpenter's rule.

The only merits of this man consisted in his being a good verbal scholar, and acting up to the letter of time and attention. I have seen him nod at the close of the long summer school-hours, perfectly wearied out; and should have pitied him, if he had taught us to do any thing but fear. Though a clergyman, very orthodox, and of rigid morals, he indulged himself in an oath, which was "God's-my-life!" When you were out in your lesson, he turned upon you with an eye like a fish; and had a trick of pinching you under the chin, and by the lobes of the ears, till he would make the blood come. He has many times lifted a boy off the ground in this way. He was indeed a proper tyrant, passionate and capricious; would take violent likes and dislikes to the same boys; fondle some without any apparent reason, though he had a leaning to the servile, and perhaps to the sons of rich people, and would persecute others in a manner truly frightful. I have seen him beat a sickly-looking, melancholy boy (C——n) about the head and ears, till the poor fellow, hot, dry-eyed, and confused, seemed lost in bewilderment. C——n, not long after he took orders, died out of his senses. I do not attribute that catastrophe to the master; and of course he could not have wished to do him any lasting mischief. He had no imagination of any sort. But there is no saying how far his treatment of the boy might have contributed to prevent his cure. Masters, as well as boys, have escaped the chance of many bitter reflections, since a wiser and more generous intercourse has increased between them.

I have some stories of this man, that will completely show his character, and at the same time relieve the reader's indignation by something ludicrous in their excess. We had a few boarders at the school; boys, whose parents were too rich to let them go on the foundation. Among them, in my time, was Carlton, a son of Lord Dorchester; Macdonald, one of the Lord Chief Baron's sons; and R——, the son of a rich merchant. Carlton, who was a fine fellow, manly and full of good sense, took his new master and his caresses very coolly, and did not want them. Little Macdonald also could dispense with them, and would put on his delicate gloves

after lesson, with an air as if he resumed his patrician plumage. R—— was meeker, and willing to be encouraged; and there would the master sit, with his arm round his tall waist, helping him to his Greek verbs, as a nurse does bread and milk to an infant, and repeating them, when he missed, with a fond patience, that astonished us criminals in drugget.

Very different was the treatment of a boy on the foundation, whose friends, by some means or other, had prevailed on the master to pay him an extra attention, and try to get him on. He had come into the school at an age later than usual, and could hardly read. There was a book used by the learners in reading, called “Dialogues between a Missionary and an Indian.” It was a poor performance, full of inconclusive arguments and other common-places. The boy in question used to appear with this book in his hand in the middle of the school, the master standing behind him. The lesson was to begin. Poor ——, whose great fault lay in a deep-toned drawl of his syllables and the omission of his stops, stood half-looking at the book, and half-casting his eye towards the right of him, whence the blows were to proceed. The master looked over him; and his hand was ready. I am not exact in my quotation at this distance of time; but the *spirit* of one of the passages that I recollect, was to the following purport, and thus did the teacher and his pupil proceed

Master. “Now, young man, have a care; or I’ll set you a *swinging* task.” (A common phrase of his.)

Pupil. (Making a sort of heavy bolt at his calamity, and never remembering his stop at the word Missionary. “*Missionary* Can you see the wind?”)

(Master gives a slap on the cheek.)

Pupil. (Raising his voice to a cry, still forgetting his stop.) “*Indian* No!”

Master. “God’s-my-life, young man! have a care how you provoke me.”

Pupil. (Always forgetting the stop.) “*Missionary* How then do you know that there is such a thing?”

(Here a terrible thump.)

Pupil. (With a shout of agony.) “*Indian* Because I feel it.”



One anecdote of his injustice will suffice for all. It is of ludicrous enormity; nor do I believe any thing more flagrantly wilful was ever done by himself. I heard Mr. C——, the sufferer, now a most respectable person in a government office, relate it with a due relish, long after quitting the school. The master was in the habit of “spiting” C——; that is to say, of taking every opportunity to be severe with him, nobody knew why. One day he comes into the school, and finds him placed in the middle of it with three other boys. He was not in one of his worst humours, and did not seem inclined to punish them, till he saw his antagonist. “Oh, oh! Sir,” said he; “what, you are among them, are you?” and gave him an exclusive thump on the face. He then turned to one of the Grecians, and said, “I have not time to flog all these boys; make them draw lots, and I’ll punish one.” The lots were drawn, and C——’s was favourable. “Oh, oh!” returned the master, when he saw them, “you have escaped, have you, Sir?” and pulling out his watch, and turning again to the Grecian, observed, that he found he *had* time to punish the whole three; “and, Sir,” added he to C——, with another slap, “I’ll begin with *you*.” He then took the boy into the library and flogged him; and, on issuing forth again, had the face to say with an air of indifference, “I have not time, after all, to punish these other two boys: let them take care how they provoke me another time.”

Often did I wish that I was a fairy, in order to play him tricks like a Caliban. We used to sit and fancy what we should do with his wig; how we would hamper and vex him; “put knives in his pillow, and halters in his pew.” To venture on a joke in our own mortal persons, was like playing with Polyphemus. One afternoon, when he was nodding with sleep over a lesson, a boy of the name of M——, who stood behind him, ventured to take a pin, and begin advancing with it up his wig. The hollow, exhibited between the wig and the nape of the neck, invited him. The boys encouraged this daring act of gallantry. Nods, and becks, and then whispers of “Do it, M.!” gave more and more valour to his hand. On a sudden, the master’s head falls back; he starts, with eyes like a shark; and seizing the unfortu-

nate culprit, who stood helpless in the attitude of holding the pin, caught hold of him, fiery with passion. A "swinging task" ensued, which kept him at home all the holidays. One of these tasks would consist of an impossible quantity of Virgil, which the learner, unable to retain it at once, wasted his heart and soul out to "get up," till it was too late.

Sometimes, however, our despot got into a dilemma, and then he did not know how to get out of it. A boy, now and then, would be roused into open and fierce remonstrance. I recollect S., now one of the mildest of preachers, starting up in his place, and pouring forth on his astonished hearer a torrent of invectives and threats, which the other could only answer by looking pale, and uttering a few threats in return. Nothing came of it. He did not like such matters to go before the governors. Another time, Favell, a Grecian, a youth of high spirit, whom he had struck, went to the school-door, opened it, and turning round with the handle in his grasp, told him he would never set foot again in the place, unless he promised to treat him with more delicacy. "Come back, child; come back!" said the other, pale, and in a faint voice. There was a dead silence. Favell came back, and nothing more was done.

A sentiment, unaccompanied with something practical, would have been lost upon him. D —, who went afterwards to the Military College at Woolwich, played him a trick apparently between jest and earnest, which amused us exceedingly. He was to be flogged; and the dreadful door of the library was approached. (They did not invest the books with flowers, as Montaigne recommends.) Down falls the criminal, and twisting himself about the master's legs, which he does the more when the other attempts to move, repeats without ceasing, "Oh, good God, Sir; consider my father, Sir; my father, Sir; you know my father." The point was felt to be getting ludicrous, and was given up. P —, now a popular preacher, was in the habit of entertaining the boys that way. He was a regular wag; and would snatch his jokes out of the very flame and fury of the master, like snap-dragon. Whenever the other struck him, he would get up; and half to avoid the blows, and half render them

ridiculous, begin moving about the school-room, making all sorts of antics. When he was struck in the face, he would clap his hand with affected vehemence to the place, and cry as rapidly, "*Oh Lord!*" If the blow came on the arm, he would grasp his arm, with a similar exclamation. The master would then go, driving and kicking him, while the patient accompanied every blow with the same comments and illustrations, making faces to us by way of index.

What a bit of the golden age was it, when the Reverend Mr. Steevens, one of the under grammar-masters, took his place, on some occasion, for a short time! Mr. Steevens was short and fat, with a handsome, cordial face. You loved him as you looked at him; and seemed as if you should love him the more, the fatter he became. I stammered when I was at that time of life; which was an infirmity, that used to get me into terrible trouble with the master. Mr. Steevens used to say, on the other hand, "Here comes our little black-haired friend, who stammers so. Now let us see what we can do for him." The consequence was, I did not hesitate half so much as with the other. When I did, it was out of impatience to please him.

Such of us were not liked the better by the master, as were in favour with his wife. She was a sprightly good-looking woman, with black eyes; and was beheld with transport by the boys, whenever she appeared at the school-door. Her husband's name, uttered in a mingled tone of good-nature and imperativeness, brought him down from his seat with smiling haste. Sometimes he did not return. On entering the school one day, he found a boy eating cherries. "Where did you get those cherries?" exclaimed he, thinking the boy had nothing to say for himself. "Mrs. ——— gave them me, Sir." He turned away scowling with disappointment. Speaking of fruit, reminds me of a pleasant trait on the part of a Grecian of the name of Le Grice. He was the maddest of all the great boys in my time; clever, full of address, and not hampered with modesty. Remote rumours, not lightly to be heard fell on our ears, respecting pranks of his amongst the nurse's daughters. He was our Lord Rochester. He had a fair handsome face, with delicate



aquiline nose, and twinkling eyes. I remember his astonishing me, when I was "a new boy," with sending me for a bottle of water, which he proceeded to pour down the back of G. a grave Deputy Grecian. On the master's asking him one day, why he, of all the boys, had given up no exercise, (it was a particular exercise that they were bound to do in the course of a long set of holidays,) he said he had "a lethargy." The extreme impudence of this puzzled the master; and I believe nothing came of it. But what I alluded to about the fruit, was this. Le Grice was in the habit of eating apples in school-time, for which he had been often rebuked. One day, having particularly pleased the master, the latter who was eating apples himself, and who would now and then with great ostentation present a boy with some half-penny token of his mansuetude, called out to his favourite of the moment;—"Le Grice, here is an apple for you." Le Grice, who felt his dignity hurt as a Grecian, but was more pleased at having this opportunity of mortifying his reprover, replied, with an exquisite tranquillity of assurance, "Sir, I never eat apples." For this, among other things, the boys adored him. Poor fellow! He and Favell (who, though very generous, was said to be a little too sensible of an humble origin,) wrote to the Duke of York when they were at College, for commissions in the army. The Duke good-naturedly sent them. Le Grice died a rake in the West Indies. Favell was killed in one of the battles in Spain, but not before he had distinguished himself as an officer and a gentleman.

The Upper Grammar School was divided into four classes, or forms. The two under ones were called little and Great Erasmus; the two upper were occupied by the Grecians and Deputy Grecians. We used to think the title of Erasmus taken from the great scholar of that name; but the sudden appearance of a portrait among us, bearing to be the likeness of a certain Erasmus Smith, Esquire, shook us terribly in this opinion, and was a hard trial of our gratitude. We scarcely relished this perpetual company of our benefactor watching us, as he seemed to do, with his omnipresent eyes. I believe he was a rich merchant, and that the forms of Little and

Great Erasmus were really named after him. It was but a poor consolation to think that he himself, or his great-uncle, might have been named after Erasmus. Little Erasmus learnt Ovid; Great Erasmus, Virgil, Terence, and the Greek Testament. The Deputy Grecians were in Homer, Cicero, and Demosthenes; the Grecians in the Greek plays and the mathematics. When a boy entered the Upper School, he was understood to be in the road to the University, provided he had inclination and talents for it; but as only one Grecian a-year went to College, the drafts out of Great and Little Erasmus into the writing-school were numerous. A few also became Deputy Grecians without going farther, and entered the world from that form. Those who became Grecians, always went to the University, though not always into the Church; which was reckoned a departure from the contract. When I first came to school, at seven years old, the names of the Grecians were Allen, Favell, Thomson, and Le Grice, brother of the Le Grice above-mentioned, and now a clergyman in Cornwall. Charles Lamb had lately been Deputy Grecian; and Coleridge had left for the University. The master, inspired by his subject with an eloquence beyond himself, once called him, "that sensible fool, Coleridge;" pronouncing the word like a dactyl. Coleridge must have alternately delighted and bewildered him. The compliment, as to the bewildering, was returned; if not the delight. The pupil, I am told, says he dreams of the master to this day, and that his dreams are horrible. A bon-mot of his is recorded, very characteristic both of pupil and master. Coleridge, when he heard of his death, said, "It was lucky that the cherubim who took him to heaven were nothing but faces and wings, or he would infallibly have flogged them by the way." This is his esoterical opinion of him. His outward and subtler opinion, or opinion exoterical, he has favoured the public with in his Literary Life. He praises him, among other things, for his good taste in poetry, and his not suffering the boys to get into the common-places of Castalian streams, Invocations to the Muses, &c. Certainly there were no such things in our days,—at least, to the best of my remembrance. But I do not think the master saw through them, out of a per-

ception of any thing farther. His objection to a common-place must have itself been a common-place. I do not remember seeing Coleridge when I was a child. Lamb's visits to the school, after he left it, I remember well, with his fine intelligent face. Little did I think I should have the pleasure of sitting with it in after-times as an old friend, and seeing it careworn still finer. Allen, the Grecian, was so handsome, though in another and more obvious way, that running one day against a barrow-woman in the street, and turning round to appease her in the midst of her abuse, she said, "Where are you driving to, you great hulking, good-for-nothing,—beautiful fellow, God bless you!" Le Grice the elder was a wag, like his brother, but more staid. He went into the Church as he ought to do, and married a rich widow. He published a translation, abridged, of the celebrated pastoral of Longus; and report at school made him the author of a little anonymous tract on the *Art of Poking the Fire*.

Few of us cared for any of the books that were taught; and no pains were taken to make us do so. The boys had no helps to information, bad or good, except what the master afforded them respecting manufactures;—a branch of knowledge, to which, as I have before observed, he had a great tendency, and which was the only point on which he was enthusiastic and gratuitous. I do not blame him for what he taught us of this kind; there was a use in it, beyond what he was aware of: but it was the only one on which he volunteered any assistance. In this he took evident delight. I remember, in explaining pigs of iron or lead to us; he made a point of crossing one of his legs with the other, and, cherishing it up and down with great satisfaction, and saying, "A pig, children, is about the thickness of my leg." Upon which, with a slavish pretence of novelty, we all looked at it, as if he had not told us so a hundred times. In every thing else, we had to hunt out our own knowledge. He would not help us with a word, till he had ascertained that we had done all we could to learn the meaning of it ourselves. This discipline was useful; and, in this and every other respect, we had all the advantages which a mechanical sense of right, and a rigid exaction of duty, could afford us; but no farther. The only super-



fluous grace that he was guilty of, was the keeping a manuscript book, in which, by a rare luck, the best exercise in English verse was occasionally copied out for immortality! To have verses in "the Book" was the rarest and highest honour conceivable to our imagination. I did not care for Ovid at that time. I read and knew nothing of Horace; though I had got somehow a liking for his character. Cicero I disliked, as I cannot help doing still. Demosthenes I was inclined to admire, but did not know why, and would very willingly have given up him and his difficulties together. Homer I regarded with horror, as a series of lessons, which I had to learn by heart before I understood him. When I had to conquer, in this way, lines which I had not construed, I had recourse to a sort of artificial memory, by which I associated the Greek words with sounds that had a meaning in English. Thus, a passage about Thetis I made to bear on some circumstance that had taken place in the school. An account of a battle was converted into a series of jokes; and the master, while I was saying my lesson to him in trepidation, little suspected what a figure he was often cutting in the text. The only classic I remember having any love for, was Virgil; and that was for the episode of Nisus and Euryalus. But there were three books I read in whenever I could, and that have often got me into trouble. These were Tooke's "Pantheon," Lempriere's "Classical Dictionary," and Spence's "Polymetis," the great folio edition with plates. Tooke was a prodigious favourite with us. I see before me, as vividly now as ever, his Mars, and Apollo, his Venus and Aurora, which I was continually trying to copy; the Mars, coming on furiously in his car: Apollo, with his radiant head, in the midst of shades and fountains; Aurora with hers, a golden dawn; and Venus, very handsome, we thought, and not looking too modest, in "a slight cymar." It is curious how completely the graces of the Pagan theology overcame with us the wise cautions and reproofs that were set against it in the pages of Mr. Tooke. Some years after my departure from school, happening to look at the work in question, I was surprised to find so much of that matter in him. When I came to reflect, I had a sort of recollection that we used

occasionally to notice it, as something inconsistent with the rest of the text,—strange, and odd, and like the interference of some pedantic old gentleman. This, indeed, is pretty nearly the case. The author has also made a strange mistake about Bacchus, whom he represents, both in his text and his print, as a mere belly-god; a corpulent child, like the Bacchus bestriding a tun. This is any thing but classical. The truth is, it was a sort of pious fraud, like many other things palmed upon antiquity. Tooke's "Pantheon" was written originally in Latin by the Jesuits. Our Lempriere was a fund of entertainment. Spence's "Polymetis" was not so easily got at. There was also something in the text that did not invite us; but we admired the fine large prints. However, Tooke was the favourite. I cannot divest myself of a notion, to this day, that there is something really clever in the picture of Apollo. The Minerva we "could not abide;" Juno was no favourite, for all her throne and her peacock; and we thought Diana too pretty. The instinct against these three goddesses begins early. I used to wonder how Juno and Minerva could have the insolence to dispute the apple with Venus.

In those times, Cooke's edition of the British Poets came up. I had got an odd volume of Spenser; and I fell passionately in love with Collins and Grey. How I loved those little sixpenny numbers containing whole poets! I doated on their size; I doated on their type, on their ornaments, on their wrappers containing lists of other poets, and on the engravings from Kirk. I bought them over and over again, and used to get up select sets, which disappeared like buttered crumpets; for I could resist neither giving them away, nor possessing them. When the master tormented me, when I used to hate and loathe the sight of Homer, and Demosthenes, and Cicero, I would comfort myself with thinking of the sixpence in my pocket, with which I should go out to Paternoster-row, when school was over, and buy another number of an English poet. I was already fond of verses. The first I remember writing were in honour of the Duke of York's "Victory at Dunkirk;" which victory, to my great mortification, turned out to be a

defeat. I compared him with Achilles and Alexander; or should rather say, trampled upon those heroes in the comparison. I fancied him riding through the field, and *shooting* right and left of him! Afterwards, when in Great Erasmus, I wrote a poem called "Winter," in consequence of reading Thomson; and when Deputy Grecian, I completed some hundred stanzas of another, called the "Fairy King," which was to be in emulation of Spenser! I also wrote a long poem in irregular Latin verses, (such as they were,) entitled "Thor;" the consequence of reading Gray's Odes, and Mallett's Northern Antiquities. English verses were the only exercise I performed with satisfaction. Themes, or prose essays, I wrote so badly, that the master was in the habit of contemptuously crumpling them up in his hand, and calling out, "Here, children, there is something to amuse you." Upon which the servile part of the boys would jump up, and seize the paper; and be amused accordingly. The essays must have been very absurd, no doubt; but those who would have tasted the ridicule best, were the last to move. There was an absurdity in giving us such essays to write. They were upon a given subject, generally a moral one, such as ambition, or the love of money: and the regular process in the manufacture was this. You wrote out the subject very fairly at top, *Quid non mortalia, &c.* or *Crescit amor nummi*. Then the ingenious thing was to repeat this apothegm in as many words and round-about phrases, as possible; which took up a good bit of the paper. Then you attempted to give a reason or two, *why* "*amor nummi*" was bad; or on what accounts heroes ought to eschew ambition;—after which naturally came a few examples, got out of "Plutarchi" or the "Selectæ e Profanis;" and the happy moralist concluded with signing his name. Somebody speaks of school-boys going about to one another on these occasions, and asking for "a little sense." That was not the phrase with us: it was, "a thought;"—"P——, can you give me a thought?"—"C——for God's sake, help me to a thought, for it only wants ten minutes to eleven." It was a joke with P——, who knew my hatred of themes, and how I used to hurry over them, to come to me at a quarter to eleven, and



say, "Hunt, have you *begun* your theme?"—"Yes, P——." He then, when the quarter of an hour had expired and the bell tolled, came again, and with a sort of rhyming formula to the other question, said, "Hunt, have you *done* your theme?"—"Yes, P——." How I dared to trespass in this way upon the patience of the master, I cannot conceive. I suspect, that the themes appeared to him more absurd than careless. Perhaps another thing perplexed him. The master was rigidly orthodox; the school-establishment also was orthodox and high tory; and there was just then a little perplexity, arising from the free doctrines inculcated by the books we learnt, and the new and alarming echo of them struck on the ears of power by the French Revolution. My father was in the habit of expressing his opinions. He did not conceal the new tendency which he felt to modify those which he entertained respecting both Church and State. His unconscious son at school, nothing doubting or suspecting, repeated his eulogies of Timoleon and the Gracchi, with all a school-boy's enthusiasm; and the master's mind was not of a pitch to be superior to this unwitting annoyance. It was on these occasions, I suspect, that he crumpled up my themes with a double contempt, and an equal degree of perplexity. There was a better exercise, consisting of an abridgment of some paper in the "*Spectator*." We made, however, little of it, and thought it very difficult and perplexing. In fact, it was a hard task for boys, utterly unacquainted with the world, to seize the best points out of the writings of masters in experience. It only gave the "*Spectator*" an unnatural gravity in our eyes. A common paper for selection, because reckoned one of the easiest, was the one beginning, "I have always preferred cheerfulness to mirth." I had heard this paper so often, and was so tired with it, that it gave me a great inclination to prefer mirth to cheerfulness.

My books were a never-ceasing consolation to me, and such they have never ceased to be. My favourites, out of school, were Spenser, Collins, Gray, and the "*Arabian Nights*." Pope I admired more than loved; Milton was above me, and the only play of Shakspeare's with which I was conversant was *Hamlet*, of which I had a

delighted awe. Neither then, however, nor at any time, have I been as fond of the drama as of any other species of writing, though I have privately tried my hand several times—farce, comedy, and tragedy; and egregiously failed in all. Chaucer, one of my best friends, I was not acquainted with till long afterwards. Hudibras I remember reading through at one desperate plunge, while I lay incapable of moving, with two scalded legs. I did it as a sort of achievement, driving on through the verses without understanding a twentieth part of them, but now and then laughing immoderately at the rhymes and similes, and catching a bit of knowledge unawares. I had a school-fellow of the name of Brooke, afterwards an officer in the East India service,—a grave, quiet boy, with a fund of manliness and good-humour at bottom. He would pick out the ludicrous couplets, like plums;—such as those on the astrologer,

Who deals in destiny's dark counsels,  
And sage opinions of the moon sells;

And on the apothecary's shop—

With stores of deleterious med'cines,  
Which whosoever took is dead since.

He had the little thick duodecimo edition, with Hogarth's plates,—dirty, and well read, looking like Hudibras himself. I read through, at the same time, and with little less sense of it as a task, Milton's "Paradise Lost." The divinity of it was so much "Heathen Greek" to us. Unluckily, I could not taste the beautiful "Heathen Greek" of the style. Milton's heaven made no impression; nor could I enter even into the earthly catastrophe of his man and woman. The only two things I thought of were their happiness in Paradise, where (to me) they eternally remained; and the strange malignity of the devil, who instead of getting them out of it, as the poet represents, only served to bind them closer. He seemed an odd shade to the picture. The figure he cut in the engravings was more in my thoughts, than any thing said of him in the poem. He was a sort of human wild beast, lurking about the garden in which they lived; in

consequence of the dress given him in some of the plates, this man with a tail occasionally confused himself in my imagination with a Roman general. I could make little of it. I believe the plates impressed me altogether much more than the poem. Perhaps they were the reason why I thought of Adam and Eve as I did, the pictures of them in their paradisaical state being more numerous than those in which they appear exiled: besides, in their exile they were together; and this constituting the best thing in their paradise, I suppose I could not so easily get miserable with them when out of it.

The scald that I speak of, as confining me to bed, was a bad one. I will give an account of it, because it furthers the elucidation of our school manners. I had then become a monitor, or one of the chiefs of a ward, and was sitting before the fire one evening, after the boys had gone to bed, wrapped up in the perusal of the "Wonderful Magazine," and having in my ear at the same time the bubbling of a great pot, or rather caldron, of water, containing what was by courtesy called a bread-pudding; being neither more nor less than a loaf or two of our bread, which, with a little sugar mashed up with it, was to serve for my supper. And there were eyes, not yet asleep, which would look at it out of their beds, and regard it as a very lordly dish. From this dream of bliss I was roused up on the sudden by a great cry, and a horrible agony in my legs. A "boy," as a fag was called, wishing to get something from the other side of the fireplace, and not choosing either to go round behind the table, or to disturb the illustrious legs of the monitor, had endeavoured to get under them or between, and so pulled the great handle of the pot after him. It was a frightful sensation. The whole of my being seemed collected in one fiery torment into my legs. Wood, the Grecian, (now Fellow of Pembroke, at Cambridge,) who was in our ward, and who was always very kind to me, (led, I believe, by my inclination for verses, in which he had a great name,) came out of his study, and after helping me off with my stockings, which was a horrid operation, the stockings being very coarse, took me in his arms to the sick ward. I shall never forget the enchanting relief occasioned by the cold air, as it blew



across the square of the sick ward. I lay there for several weeks, not allowed to move for some time; and caustics became necessary before I got well. The getting well was delicious. I had no tasks—no master; plenty of books to read; and the nurse's daughter (*absit calumnia*) brought me tea and buttered toast, and encouraged me to play on the flute. My playing consisted of a few tunes by rote; my fellow-invalids (none of them in very desperate case) would have it rather than no playing at all; so we used to play, and tell stories, and go to sleep, thinking of the blessed sick holiday we should have next day, and of the bowl of milk and bread for breakfast, which was alone worth being sick for. The sight of Mr. Long's probe was not so pleasant. We preferred seeing it in the hands of his pupil, Mr. Vincent, whose manners, quiet and mild, had double effect on a set of boys more or less jealous of the mixed humbleness and importance of their school. This is most likely the same Mr. Vincent who now lectures at St. Bartholemew's. He was dark, like a West Indian, and I used to think him handsome. Perhaps the nurse's daughter taught me to think so, for she was a considerable observer.

I was fifteen when I put off my band and blue skirts for a coat and neckcloth. I was then first Deputy Grecian; and had the honour of going out of the school in the same rank, at the same age, and for the same reason, as my friend Charles Lamb. The reason was, that I hesitated in my speech. I did not stammer half so badly as I used; and it is very seldom that I halt at a syllable now; but it was understood that a Grecian was bound to deliver a public speech before he left school, and to go into the Church afterwards; and as I could do neither of these things, a Grecian I could not be. So I put on my coat and waistcoat, and, what was stranger, my hat; a very uncomfortable addition to my sensations. For eight years I had gone bareheaded; save, now and then, a few inches of pericranium, when the little cap, no larger than a crumpet, was stuck on one side, to the mystification of the old ladies in the streets. I then cared as little for the rains as I did for any thing else. I had now a vague sense of worldly trouble, and of a great and serious change in my condition; besides which, I had to

quit my old cloisters, and my playmates, and long habits of all sorts; so that, what was a very happy moment to school-boys in general, was to me one of the most painful of my life. I surprised my school-fellows and the master with the melancholy of my tears. I took leave of my books, of my friends, of my seat in the Grammar School, of my good-hearted nurse and her daughter, of my bed, of the cloisters, and of the very pump out of which I had taken so many delicious draughts, as if I should never see them again, though I meant to come every day. The fatal hat was put on; my father was come to fetch me:

We, hand in hand, with strange new steps and slow,  
Through Holborn took our meditative way.

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THE AUTHOR'S FIRST PUBLISHED VERSES.—CHARACTER  
OF DR. FRANKLIN.—PORTRAITS OF MAURICE AND MR.  
LLWYD.

For some time after I left school, I did nothing but visit my school-fellows, haunt the book-stalls, and write verses. My father collected my verses, and published them with a large list of subscribers, numbers of whom belonged to his old congregations. I was as proud perhaps of the book at that time, as I am ashamed of it now. The French Revolution had not then, as afterwards, by a natural consequence, shaken up and refreshed the sources of thought all over Europe. At least, I was not old enough, perhaps was not able, to get out of the trammels of the regular imitative poetry and versification taught in the schools. My book was a heap of imitations, some of them clever enough for a youth of sixteen, but absolutely worthless in every other respect. However, the critics were very kind; and as it was unusual at that time to publish at so early a period of life, my age made me a kind of "Young Roscius" in authorship. I was introduced to literati, and shown about among parties.

My father taking me to see Dr. Raine, Master of the Charter House, the doctor, who was very kind and pleasant, but who probably drew none of our deductions in favour of the young writer's abilities, warned me against the perils of authorship; adding as a final dehortative, that "the shelves were full." It was not till we came away, that I thought of an answer, which I conceived would have "annihilated" him. "Then, Sir" (I should have said, thought I) "we will make another." Not having been in time with this repartee, I felt all that anguish of undeserved and unnecessary defeat, which has been so pleasantly described in the *Miseries of Human Life*. This, thought I, would have been an answer befitting a poet, and calculated to make a figure in biography.

A mortification that I encountered at a house in Cavendish Square, affected me less, though it surprised me a good deal more. I had been held up, as usual, to the example of the young gentlemen, and the astonishment of the ladies, when, in the course of the dessert, one of mine host's daughters, a girl of exuberant spirits and not of the austere breeding, came up to me, and, as if she had discovered that I was not so young as I pretended to be, exclaimed, "What a beard you have got." at the same time convincing herself of the truth of her discovery by taking hold of it! Had I been a year or two older, I should have taken my revenge. As it was, I know not how I behaved; but the next morning I hastened to have a beard no longer.

I was now a man, and resolved not to be out of countenance next time. Not long afterwards, my grandfather, sensible of the new fame in his family, but probably alarmed also at the consequences to which it might lead, sent me word, that if I would come to Philadelphia, "he would make a man of me." I sent word in return, that "men grew in England as well as America; an answer which repaid me for the loss of my apothegm at Dr. Raine's. I was very angry with him for his niggardly conduct to my mother. I could not help, for some time, identifying the whole American character with his; an injustice which helped to colour my opinions for a still longer time. Partly on the same account, I acquired a



still longer time. Partly on the same account, I acquired a dislike for his friend Dr. Franklin, author of "Poor Richard's Almanack;" a heap, as it appeared to me, of "scoundrel maxims."\* I think I now appreciate Dr. Franklin as I ought; but although I can see the utility of such publications as his Almanack for a rising commercial state, and hold it useful as a memorandum to uncalculating persons like myself, who happen to live in

\* Thomson's phrase, in the "Castle of Indolence," speaking of a miserly money-getter:—

" ' A penny saved is a penny got :'  
Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,  
Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,  
Till it hath quench'd his fire and banished his pot."

The reader will not imagine that I suppose all money-makers to be of this description. I have good reason to know otherwise. Very gallant spirits have I met with among them, who only take to this mode of activity for want of a better, and are as generous in disbursing, as they are vigorous in acquiring. You may always know the common run, as in other instances, by the soreness with which they feel attacks on the body corporate.

From observations of this nature on the part of a writer, who is neither fond of money, nor competent to an ordinary calculation, the reader will make all the drawbacks that the confession of that incompetency will allow : at the same time, it may be worth his while to consider that, for a reason which could be easily given, improvements of the most wholesale nature, in the condition of mankind, have not been accustomed to issue out of hands the most occupied in detail ; and this is particularly remarkable in affairs of trade and commerce, the very changes which have ultimately been turned to the greatest advantage by the parties the most concerned, having been in the first instance opposed by no persons with so much violence. Of this fact, the revolutions in South America have furnished the latest, and not the least, remarkable proof.

Extremes, however, meet oftener than they are supposed to do. The greatest calculators I ever met with, were men who had come to the conclusion that the greatest of all the advantages of calculation consisted in knowing how much better the world could do without it. They even hoped that by means of the knowledge of this fact, explained by calculation itself, the world would ultimately be brought to their opinion ; and certainly, if any thing could do it with some, that would be the way ; but it is experiment, recommended by the progress of opinion, and hastened and forced by necessity, that must produce this and all other changes.

For the assertion that Dr. Franklin cut off his son with a shilling, my only authority is family tradition. It is observable, however, that the friendliest of his biographers are not only forced to admit that he seemed a little too fond of money, but notice the mysterious secrecy in which his family history is involved.

an old one, I think it has no business either in commercial nations long established, or in others who do not found their happiness in that sort of power. Franklin, with all his abilities, is but at the head of those who think that man lives "by bread alone." He will commit none of the follies, none of the intolerances, the absence of which is necessary to the perfection of his system; and in setting his face against these, he discountenances a great number of things very inimical to higher speculations. But he was no more a fit representative of what human nature largely requires, and may reasonably hope to attain to, than negative represents positive, or the clearing away a ground in the back settlements, and setting to work upon it, represents the work in its completion. Something of the pettiness and materiality of his first occupation always stuck to him. He took nothing for a truth or a matter-of-fact that he could not handle, as it were, like his types; and yet, like all men of this kind, he was liable, when put out of the ordinary pale of his calculations, to fall into the greatest errors, and substitute the integrity of his reputation for that of whatsoever he chose to do. From never doing wrong in little things, he conceived that he could do no wrong in great; and, in the most deliberate act of his life, he showed he had grievously mistaken himself. He was, I allow, one of the *cardinal* great men of his time. He was Prudence. But he was not what he took himself for,—all the other Virtues besides; and, inasmuch as he was deficient in those, he was deficient even in his favourite one. He was not Temperance; for, in the teeth of his capital recommendations of that virtue, he did not scruple to get burly and big with the enjoyments that he cared for. He was not Justice; for he knew not how to see fair play between his own wisdom and that of a thousand wants and aspirations, of which he knew nothing; and he cut off his son with a shilling, for differing with him in politics. Lastly, he was not Fortitude; for, having few passions and no imagination, he knew not what it was to be severely tried; and if he had been, there is every reason to conclude, from the way in which he treated his son, that his self-love would have been the part in which he felt the torture; and that as his Justice was only arith-

metic, so his Fortitude would have been nothing but stubbornness. If Franklin had been the only great man of his time, he would merely have contributed to make the best of a bad system, and so hurt the world by prolonging it; but, luckily, there were the French and English philosophers besides, who saw farther than he did, and provided for higher wants. I feel grateful to him, for one, inasmuch as he extended the sphere of liberty, and helped to clear the earth of the weeds of sloth and ignorance, and the wild beasts of superstition; but when he comes to build final homes for us, there I rejoice that wiser hands interfere. His line and rule are not every thing. They are not even a tenth part of it. Cocker's numbers are good; but those of Plato and Pythagoras have their merits too, or we should have been made of dry bones and tangents, and not had the fancies in our heads, and the hearts beating in our bosoms, that make us what we are. We should not even have known that Cocker's numbers were worth any thing; nor would Dr. Franklin himself have played on the harmonica, albeit he must have done it in a style very different from that of Milton or Cimarosa. Finally, the writer of this passage on the Doctor would not have ventured to give his opinion of so great a man in so explicit a manner. I should not have ventured to give it, had I not been backed by so many powerful interests of humanity, and had I not suffered in common, and more than in common, with the rest of the world, from a system which, under the guise of economy and social advantage, tends to double the love of wealth and the hostility of competition, to force the best things down to a level with the worst, and to reduce mankind to the simplest and most mechanical law of their nature, divested of its heart and soul,—the law of being in motion. All the advantages of the present system of money-making, which may be called the great *lay* superstition of modern times, might be obtained by a fifth part of the labour, if more equally distributed. The rest is pure vanity and vexation of spirit, or the indulgence of a false notion of superiority, or the more melancholy necessity produced by wars and taxation, to which this very notion gives rise.

Among those with whom my book made me acquainted, was the late Rev. Mr. Maurice, of the British Mu-



seum, author of "Indian antiquities." I mention him more particularly, as I do others, because he had a character of his own, and makes a portrait. I had seen an engraving of him, representing a slender, prim-eyed, enamel-faced person, very tightly dressed and particular, with no expression but that of propriety, and born to be an archbishop. What was my surprise, when I beheld a short, chubby, good-humoured companion, with boyish features, and a lax dress and manner, heartily glad to see you, and tender over his wine! He was a sort of clerical Horace: he might, by some freak of the minister, have been made a bishop; and he thought he deserved it for having proved the identity of the Hindoo with the Christian Trinity, which was the object of his book! But he began to despond on that point, when I knew him; and he drank as much wine for sorrow, as he would, had he been made a bishop, for joy. He was a man of a social and overflowing nature; more fit, in truth, to set an example of charity than faith, and would have made an excellent Bramin of the Rama-Deeva worship. His Hymns to the deities of India, were as good as Sir William Jones's, and his attention to the amatory theology of the country (allowing for his deficiency in the language) as close. He was not so fortunate as Sir William in retaining a wife whom he loved. I have heard him lament, in very genuine terms, his widowed condition, and the task of finishing the great manuscript catalogue of the Museum books, to which his office had bound him. This must have been a torture, physical as well as moral; for he had weak eyes, and wrote with a magnifying glass as big round as the palm of his hand. With this, in a tall thick handwriting, as if painting a set of rails, he was to finish the folio catalogues, and had produced the seven volumes of Indian Antiquities! Nevertheless, he seemed to lament his destiny, rather in order to accommodate the weakness of his lachrymal organs, than out of any internal uneasiness; for with the aspect he had the spirits of a boy; and his laughter would follow his tears with a happy incontinence. He was always catching cold, and getting well of it after dinner. Many a roast fowl and bottle of wine have I enjoyed with him in his rooms at the British Museum; and if I thought the reader, as well as myself, had not a regard for him, I would not have

thus opened their doors. They consisted of the first floor in the turret nearest Museum Street. I never pass them, without remembering how he used to lay down his magnifying glass, take both my hands, and condescend to anticipate the pleasant chat we should have about authors and books over his wine;—I say, condescend, because, though he did not affect any thing of that sort, it was a remarkable instance of his good-nature, and his freedom from pride, to place himself on a level in this manner with a youth in his teens, and pretend that I brought him as much amusement as he gave. Owing to the exclusive notions I entertained of friendship, I mystified him by answering the “Dear Sirs” of his letters in a more formal manner. I fear it induced him to make unfavourable comparisons of my real disposition with my behaviour at table; and it must be allowed, that having no explanation on the subject, he had a right to be mystified. Somehow or other, (I believe it was because a new Dulcinea called me elsewhere,) the acquaintance dropped, and I did not see him for many years. He died, notwithstanding his wine and his catarrhs, at a good old age, writing verses to the last, and showing what a young heart he retained by his admiration of nature: and undoubtedly this it was that enabled him to live so long; for, though the unfeeling are apt to outlast the sensitive during a sophisticate and perplexing state of society, it is astonishing how long a cordial pulse will keep playing, if allowed reasonably to have its way. Were the lives of mankind as natural as they should be, and their duties made as cheerful, the Maurices and the Horaces would outlast all the formalists buttoned up in denial, as surely as the earth spins round, and the pillars fall.

I wish I could relate half the stories Mr. Maurice told me. He told them well, and I should have been glad to repeat them in his own words. I recollect but one, which I shall tell for his sake, though it is not without a jest. I hope it is not old. He said there was a gentleman, not very robust, but an enthusiast for nature and good health, who entertained a prodigious notion of the effects of smelling to fresh earth.\* Accordingly, not to

\* Bacon had a notion of this sort, and would have a piece of earth brought him fresh out of the ground to smell to; but then he put

go too nicely about the matter, but to do it like a man, he used to walk every morning to Primrose Hill; and, digging a hole of a good depth in the ground, prostrate himself, and put his head in it. The longer he kept his head immersed, the more benefit he thought he derived; so that he would lie for several minutes, and look like a Persian worshipping the sun. One day some thieves set upon him, and, retaining his head under that salutary restriction, picked his pockets.

Mr. Maurice got me permission to read in the Museum; which I did regularly for some time. It was there I began to learn Italian. I obtained the same privilege for a person who became one of its most enthusiastic visitors, and who is worth describing. His name is Llwyd (for he would account it treason to his country to write it Lloyd,) and he is author, among other pieces, of a poem entitled "Beaumaris Bay," which obtained a great deal of praise from the critics. I say, "is," because I hope he is alive to read this account of himself, and to attribute it (as he assuredly will do) to its proper motives. Mr. Llwyd was probably between thirty and forty when I knew him. His face and manner of speaking were as ancient British as he could desire; but these merits he had in common with others. What rendered him an extraordinary person was, that he had raised himself, by dint of his talents and integrity, from the situation of a gentleman's servant to a footing with his superiors, and they were generous and wise enough to acknowledge it. From what I was told, nothing could be better done on all sides. They encouraged, and, I believe, enabled him to make good his position; and he gave the best proof of his right to it, by the delicacy of his acquiescence. His dress was plain and decent, equally remote from sordidness and pretension; and his manners possessed that na-

wine to it. I fancy I hear Mr. Maurice exclaiming, "Ah, he was a great man!" There was a pomp and altitude in the ways of Bacon, and all in the highest taste, that serves almost to reconcile us to Cowley's conceit, in styling him "Nature's Lord Chancellor." His house and gardens were poetically magnificent. He had the flowers in season always put upon his table; sometimes had music in the next room while he was writing; and would ride out in an open chariot during the rain, with his head bare, saying "he felt the spirit of the universe upon him!"



tural good breeding, which results from the wish to please and the consciousness of being respected. Mr. Llwyd came to London at certain periods, took an humble lodging, and passed his time in visiting his friends, and reading at the Museum. His passion was for the antiquities of his native country. If you looked over his book, it was most probably full of the coat-armour of Wynnes and Prices. I was indebted to him for an introduction to his friend Mr. Owen, translator of the *Paradise Lost* into Welsh. Both of them were of the order of Bards; and Mr. Owen carried the same seal of his British origin in his face and manners, and appeared to possess the same simplicity and goodness. Furthermore, he had a Welsh harp in his room, and I had the satisfaction of hearing him play upon it. He was not very like Gray's bard; and instead of Conway's flood, and a precipice, and an army coming to cut our throats, we had tea and bread and butter, and a snug parlour with books in it. Notwithstanding my love of Gray, and a considerable wish to see a proper ill-used bard, I thought this a better thing, though I hardly know whether my friends did. I am not sure, with all their good-nature, whether they would not have preferred a good antiquarian death, with the opportunity of calling King Edward a rascal, and playing their harps at him, to all the Saxon conveniences of modern times.

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THE AUTHOR'S FIRST PROSE.—CHARACTER OF VOLTAIRE.—MORE VERSES.—MR. BELL, OF THE "WEEKLY MESSENGER."—BADINI, AN ITALIAN OPERA POET.—ORIGIN OF THE PAPER CALLED THE "NEWS," AND ACCOUNT OF THE THEATRICALS IN IT.

It was not long after this period, that I ventured upon publishing my first prose, which consisted of a series of essays under the title of "*The Traveller, by Mr. Town, Junior, Critic and Censor-General.*" They came out in the evening paper of that name; and were imitations, as the reader will guess, of the "*Connoisseur*," which professed to be written by Mr. Town, Critic and Censor-

General. I offered them with fear and trembling to Mr. Quin, the Editor of the "Traveller," and was astonished at the gaiety with which he accepted them. What astonished me more, was a perquisite of five or six copies of the paper, which I enjoyed every Saturday when my essays appeared, and with which I used to re-issue from Bolt-Court in a state of transport. I had been told, but could not easily conceive, that the Editor of a new evening paper would be happy to fill up his pages with any decent writing; but Mr. Quin praised me besides, and I could not behold the long columns of type, written by myself, in a public paper, without thinking there must be some merit in them besides that of being a stop-gap. They were lively, and showed a tact for writing; but nothing more. There was something, however, in my writings at that period, and for some years afterwards, which, to observers, might have had an interest beyond what the author supplied, and amounted to a sign of the times. I allude to a fondness for imitating Voltaire. I had met with translations of several of his pieces on the book-stalls; and being prepared by a variety of circumstances, already noticed, to think that existing opinions and institutions might be fallible, I was transported with the gay courage and unquestionable humanity of that extraordinary person, and soon caught the tone of his cunning implications and provoking turns. Voltaire, in an essay written by himself in the English language, has said of Milton, in a passage which would do honour to our best writers, that when the poet saw the Adamo of Andreini at Florence, he "pierced through the absurdity of the plot to the hidden majesty of the subject." It may be said of himself, that he pierced through the conventional majesty of a great many subjects, to the hidden absurdity of the plot. He could not build as he could destroy. He was the merry general of an army of pioneers. But he laid the axe to a heap of savage abuses; pulled the corner-stones out of dungeons and inquisitions; bowed and mocked the most tyrannical absurdities out of countenance; and raised one prodigious peal of laughter at superstition, from Naples to the Baltic. He was the first man who got the power of opinion, and common sense openly recognized as a great reigning authority;

and who made the acknowledgement of it a point of wit and cunning, with those who had hitherto thought they had the world to themselves. I admired him more than I do now; I thought he had more imagination, and a deeper insight into all the wants and capabilities of mankind. But though I think less of him as one who understands all they want, I think now, more than ever, that he cannot be too highly appreciated as one who understood what they want not. I differ with him in many points, moral, political, and religious; and I state this, not to make out that my difference is of any value, but to show that those who honestly differ with a man, can afford to do him justice; and that the true way of regarding Voltaire, in order to do him this justice, and ourselves too, is to look at him in the broad light of the great opposer of *dogma*; leaving us, in our still broader light, if we have it, to retain whatever good he omitted, and to add whatever improvement we can discover. It is enough, that he has taught us not to dictate and arrogate on the one hand, and not to submit to any thing uninquired into or inhuman on the other.

An abridgment that I picked up of the Philosophical Dictionary (a translation) was for a long while my textbook, both for opinion and style. I was also a great admirer of L'Ingenu, or the Sincere Huron; and the Essay on the Philosophy of History. In the character of the Sincere Huron I thought I found a resemblance to my own, as most readers do in those of their favourites: and this piece of self-love helped me to discover as much good-heartedness in Voltaire as I discerned wit. Can-dide, I confess, I could not like. I enjoyed passages; but the laughter was not as good-humoured as usual; there was a view of things in it, which I never entertained then or afterwards, and into which the author had been led rather in order to provoke Leibnitz, than because it was natural to him; and, to crown my unwilling dislike, the book had a coarseness, apart from graceful and pleasurable ideas, which I have never been able to endure. There were passages in the abridgment of the Philosophical Dictionary which I always passed over; but the rest delighted me beyond measure. I have not seen it



for years till the other day, having used in the meantime a French copy of the work itself; but I can repeat passages out of it now, and will lay two or three short ones before the reader, as specimens of what made such an impression upon me. They are in Voltaire's best manner; which consists in an artful intermixture of the conventional dignity and real absurdity of what he is exposing, the tone being as grave as the dignity seems to require, and the absurdity coming out as if unintentionally and by the by.

Speaking of the Song of Solomon, (of which, by the way, his criticism is very far from being in the right, though he puts it so pleasantly,) he thinks he has the royal lover at a disadvantage with his comparisons of noses to towers, and eyes to fishpools, and then concludes with observing, "All this, it must be confessed, is not in the taste of the Latin poet; *but then a Jew is not obliged to write like Virgil.*" Now it would not be difficult to show, that Eastern and Western poetry had better be two things than one; or, at least, that they have a right to be so, and can lay claim to their own beauties; but, at the same time, it is impossible to help laughing at this pretended admission *in Solomon's favour*, and the cunning introduction of the phrase "*a Jew*," contrasted with the dignity of the name of Virgil.

In another part of the same article on Solomon, where he speaks of the many thousands of chariots which the Jewish monarch possessed, (a quantity that certainly have a miraculous appearance, though, perhaps, explainable by a good scholar,) he says he cannot conceive, for the life of him, what Solomon did with such a multitude of carriages, "unless," adds he, "it was to take *the ladies of his seraglio* an airing on the borders of the lake of Genesareth, or along the brook Cedron; a charming spot of ground, *except* that it is dry nine months in the year, *and the ground a little stony.*" At these passages I used to roll with laughter; and I cannot help laughing now, writing as I am, alone by my fire-side. They tell nothing, except against those who confound every thing the most indifferent, relating to the great men of the Bible, with something sacred; and who have thus

done more harm to their own distinctions of sacred and profane, than all which has been charged on the ridicule they occasion.

The last quotation shall be from the admirable article on War, which made a profound impression on me. You cannot help laughing at it: the humour is high and triumphant; but the laugh ends in very serious reflections on the nature of war, and the very doubtful morality of those who make no scruple, when it suits them, of advocating the certainty of calamity in some things, while they protest against the least hazard of it in others. Voltaire notices the false and frivolous pretensions, upon which princes subject their respective countries to the miseries of war, purely to oblige their own cupidity and ambition. One of them, he says, finds in some old document a claim or pretence of some relation of his to some piece of land in the possession of another. He gives the other notice of his claim; the other will not hear of it: so the prince in question "picks up a great many men, who have nothing to do and nothing to lose; *binds their hats with coarse white worsted five sous to the ell*; turns them to the right and left, *and marches away with them to glory.*" Now the glory and the white worsted, the potentate who is to have an addition to his coffers, and and the poor soul who is to be garnished for it with a halo of bobbin, "five sous to the ell," here come into admirable contrast. War may be necessary on some occasions, till a wiser remedy be found; and ignoble causes may bring into play very noble passions; but it is desirable that the world should take the necessity of no existing system for granted, which is accompanied with horrible evils. This is a lesson which Voltaire has taught us; and it is invaluable. Our author terminates his ridicule on War with a sudden and startling apostrophe to an eminent preacher on a very different subject. The familiar tone of the proof is very pleasant. "Bourdalone, a very bad sermon have you made against Love; against that passion which consoles and restores the human race; but not a word, bad or good, have you said against this passion that tears us to pieces." (I quote from memory, and am not sure of my words in this extract; but the spirit of them is the same.) He adds, that all the miseries

ever produced in the world by Love, do not come up to the calamities occasioned by a single campaign. If he means Love in the abstract, unconnected with the systems by which it has been regulated in different parts of the world, he is probably in the right: but the miscalculation is enormous, if he includes those. The seventy thousand prostitutes alone in the streets of London, which we are told are the inevitable accompaniment, and even safeguard, of the virtuous part of our system, (to say nothing of the tempers, the jealousies, the chagrins, the falsehoods, the quarrels, and the repeated murders which afflict and astonish us even in that,) most probably experience more bitterness of heart every day of their lives, than is caused by any one campaign, however wild and flagitious.

Besides Voltaire and the "Connoisseur," I was very fond at that time of "Johnson's Lives of the Poets," and a great reader of Pope. My admiration of the "Rape of the Lock" led me to write a long mock-heroic poem, entitled the "Battle of the Bridal Ring," the subject of which was a contest between two rival orders of spirits, on whom to bestow a lady in marriage. I venture to say, that it would have been well spoken of by the critics, and was not worth two-pence. I recollect one couplet, which will serve to show how I mimicked the tone of my author. It was an apostrophe to Mantua,—

"Mantua, of great and small the long renown,  
That now a Virgil giv'st, and now a gown."

Dryden I read too, but not with that relish for his nobler versification which I afterwards acquired. Dramatic reading, with all my love of the play, I never was fond of; yet, in the interval of my departure from school, and my getting out of my teens, I wrote two farces, a comedy, and a tragedy; and the plots of all (such as they were) were inventions. The hero of my tragedy was the *Earl of Surrey* (Howard, the poet) who was put to death by Henry the Eighth. I forget what the comedy was upon. The title of one of the farces was the "Beau Miser," which may explain the nature of it. The other was called "A Hundred a Year," and turned



upon a hater of the country, who upon having an annuity to that amount given him, on condition of his never going out of London, becomes a hater of the town. In the last scene, his annuity died a jovial death in a country-tavern; the bestower entering the room just as my hero had got on a table, with a glass in his hand, to drink confusion to the metropolis. All these pieces were, I doubt not, as bad as need be. About ten years ago, being sleepless one night with a fit of enthusiasm, in consequence of reading about the Spanish play of the Cid in Lord Holland's "Life of Guillen de Castro," I determined to write a tragedy on the same subject, which was accepted at Drury Lane. Perhaps the conduct of this piece was not without merit, the conclusion of each act throwing the interest into the succeeding one; but I had great doubts of all the rest of it; and on receiving it from Mr. Elliston to make an alteration in the third act, very judiciously proposed by him, I looked the whole of the play over again, and convinced myself it was unfit for the stage: I therefore withheld it. I had made my hero too much like the beau ideal of a modern reformer, instead of the half god-like, half-bigoted soldier that he was. I began afterwards to re-cast the play, but grew tired and gave it up. The Cid would make a delicious character for the stage, or in any work; not, indeed, as Corneille declaimed him, nor as inferior writers might adapt him to the reigning taste; but taken, I mean, as he was, with the noble impulses he received from nature, the drawbacks with which a bigoted age qualified them, and the social and open-hearted pleasantries (not the least evidence of his nobleness) that brings forth his heart, as it were, in flashes through the stern armour. But this would require a strong hand, and readers capable of grappling with it. In the meantime, they should read of him in Mr. Southey's Chronicle of the Cid, (an admirable summary from the old Spanish writers,) and in the delightful verses at the end of it, translated from an old Spanish poem by Mr. Hookham Frere, with a triumphant force and fidelity, that you know to be true to the original at once. It seems to me, that if I could live my life over again, and command a proper quantity of health and muscles from

my ancestors, or a gymnasium, I could write some such poem myself, and make a book of it. All that I pretend at present, when I think what a poem ought to be, is to be a reader not unworthy. As to the drama, I am persuaded I have no sort of talent for it; though I can paint a portrait or so in dialogue pretty well out of history, as in the imaginary conversations of Pope and Swift, that have appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

At the period I am speaking of, circumstances introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. Bell, the Proprietor of the "*Weekly Messenger*." In his house in the Strand, I used to hear of politics and dramatic criticism, and of the persons who wrote them. Mr. Bell had been well known as a bookseller; and a speculator in elegant typography. It is to him the public are indebted for the small edition of the Poets that preceded Cooke's, and which, with all my predilections for that work, was unquestionably superior to it. Besides, it included Chaucer and Spenser. The omission of these in Cooke's edition was as unpoetical a sign of the times, as the existing familiarity with their names is the reverse. It was thought a mark of good sense! As if good sense, in matters of literature, did not consist as much in knowing what was poetical in poetry, as brilliant in wit. Mr. Bell was upon the whole a remarkable person. He was a plain man, with a red face, and a nose exaggerated by intemperance; and yet there was something not unpleasing in his countenance, especially when he spoke. He had sparkling black eyes, a good-natured smile, gentlemanly manners, and one of the most agreeable voices I ever heard. He had no acquirements, perhaps not even grammar; but his taste in putting forth a publication, and getting the best artists to adorn it, was new in those times, and may be admired in any; and the same taste was observable in his house. He knew nothing of poetry. He thought the *Della Cruscans* fine people, because they were known in the circles; and for Milton's *Paradise Lost* he had the same epithet as for Mrs. Crouch's face, or the phaeton of Major Topham: he thought it "pretty." Yet a certain liberal instinct, and turn for large dealing, made him include Chaucer

and Spenser in his edition; he got Stothard to adorn the one, and Mortimer the other; and in the midst, I suspect, of very equivocal returns, published a British Theatre with embellishments, and a similar edition of the plays of Shakspeare,—the incorrectest work, according to Mr. Chalmers, that ever issued from the press. Unfortunately for Mr. Bell, he had as great a taste for neat wines and ankles, as for pretty books; and, to crown his misfortunes, the Prince of Wales, to whom he was bookseller, once did him the honour to partake of an entertainment at his house. He afterwards became a bankrupt. He was one of those men whose temperament and turn for enjoyment throw a sort of grace over whatsoever they do, standing them in stead of every thing but prudence, and sometimes even supplying them with the consolations which imprudence itself has forfeited. After his bankruptcy he set up a newspaper, which became profitable to every body but himself. He had become so used to lawyers and bailiffs, that the more his concerns flourished, the more his debts flourished with them. It seemed as if he would have been too happy without them; too exempt from the cares that beset the prudent. The first time I saw him, he was standing in a chemist's shop, waiting till the road was clear for him to issue forth. He had a *tooth-ache*, for which he held a handkerchief over his mouth; and while he kept a sharp look-out with his bright eye, was alternately groaning in a most gentlemanly manner over his gums and addressing some polite words to the shopman. I had not then been introduced to him, and did not know his person; so that the effect of his voice upon me was unequivocal. I liked him for it, and wished the bailiff at the devil.

In the office of the "Weekly Messenger," I saw one day a person who looked the epitome of squalid authorship. He was wretchedly dressed and dirty; and the rain, as he took his hat off, came away from it as from a spout. This was a man of the name of Badini, who had been poet at the Opera, and was then editor of the "Messenger." He was afterwards sent out of the country under the Alien Act, and became reader of the English papers to Bonaparte. His intimacy with some of the



first families in the country, among whom he had been a teacher, is supposed to have been of use to the French government. He wrote a good idiomatic English style, and was a man of abilities. I had never before seen a *poor author*, such as are described in books; and the spectacle of the reality startled me. Like other authors, however, who are at once very poor and very clever, his poverty was his own fault. When he received any money, he disappeared, and was understood to spend it in alehouses. We heard that in Paris he kept his carriages. I have since met with authors of the same squalid description; but they were destitute of ability, and had no more right to profess literature as a trade, than alchemy. It is from these that the common notions about the poverty of the profession are taken. One of them, poor fellow! might have cut a figure in Smollett. He was a proper ideal author, in rusty black, out at elbows, thin and pale. He brought me an ode about an eagle; for which the publisher of a magazine, he said, had had "the inhumanity" to offer him half-a-crown. His necessity for money he did not deny; but his great anxiety was to know whether, as a poetical composition, his ode was not worth more. "Is that *poetry*, Sir?" cried he; "that's what I want to know—is that *poetry*?" rising from his chair, and staring and trembling in all the agony of contested excellence.

My brother John, at the beginning of the year 1805, set up a paper, called the "News," and I went to live with him in Brydges-Street, and write the theatricals in it. It was he that invented the round window in the office of that paper, to attract attention. I say, the paper was his own, but it is a singular instance of my incuriousness, that I do not know to this day, and most likely never did, whether he had any share in it or not. Upon reflection, my impression is, that he had not. At all events, he was the printer and publisher, and he occupied the house.

It was the custom at that time for editors of papers to be intimate with actors and dramatists. They were often proprietors, as well as editors; and, in that case, it was not expected that they should escape the usual intercourse, or wish to do so. It was thought a feather in

the cap of all parties; and with their feathers they tickled one another. The newspaper man had consequence in the green-room, and plenty of tickets for his friend's; and he dined at amusing tables. The dramatist secured a good-natured critique in his journal, sometimes got it written himself, or, according to Mr. Reynolds, was even himself the author of it. The actor, if he was of any eminence, stood upon the same ground of reciprocity, and not to know a pretty actress, would have been a want of the knowing in general. Upon new performers, and upon writers not yet introduced, a journalist was more impartial; and sometimes, where the proprietor was in one interest more than another, or for some personal reason grew offended with an actor or set of actors, a criticism would occasionally be hostile, and even severe. An editor, too, would now and then suggest to his employer the policy of exercising a freer authority, and obtain influence enough with him to show symptoms of it. I believe Mr. Bell's editor, who was more clever, was also more impartial than most critics; though the publisher of the "British Theatre," and patron of the "Della Crusicans," must have been hampered with literary intimacies. The best chance for an editor, who wished to have any thing like an opinion of his own, was the appearance of a rival newspaper with a strong theatrical connexion. Influence was here threatened with diminution. It was to be held up on other grounds; and the critic was permitted to find out, that a bad play was not good, or an actress's petticoat of the lawful dimensions.

Puffing and plenty of tickets were, however, the system of the day. It was an interchange of amenities over the dinner-table; a flattery of power on the one side, and puns on the other; and what the public took for a criticism on a play, was a draft upon the box-office, or reminiscences of last Thursday's salmon and lobster-sauce.

Things are altered now. Editors of newspapers (with one or two scandalous exceptions, and they make a bullying show of independence) are of a higher and more independent order; and proprietors are wealthier, and leave their editors more to themselves. Tickets are ac-

cepted from the theatres; but it is upon an understanding that theatrical criticism of any sort is useful to both parties. At the time when the "News" was set up, there was no such thing, strictly speaking, as impartial newspaper criticism; there was hardly any criticism at all—I mean, any attempt at it, or articles of any length. The best critiques were to be found in weekly papers, because their corruption was of less importance. For the most part the etiquette was, to write as short and as favourable a paragraph on the new piece as could be; to say that Banister was "excellent," and Mrs. Jordan "charming;" to notice the "crowded house," or invent it, if necessary; and to conclude by observing, that "the whole went off with *éclat*." If a lord was in the boxes, he was noticed as well as the actors;—a thing never done now, except as a help to a minor theatre. Lords may sit by dozens in the boxes at Covent Garden, and an editor take no more notice of them than chorus-singers. For the rest, it was a critical religion in those times to admire Mr. Kemble; and at the period in question. Master Betty had appeared, and been hugged to the hearts of the town as the young Roscius.

We saw that independence in theatrical criticism would be a great novelty. We announced it, and nobody believed us:—we stuck to it, and the town believed every thing we said. The proprietors of the "News," of whom I knew so little that I cannot recollect with certainty any one of them, very handsomely left me to myself. My retired and scholastic habits kept me so, and the pride of success confirmed my independence with regard to others. I was then in my twentieth year, an early period at that time for a writer. The usual exaggeration of report made me younger than I was; and after being a "young Roscius" poetical, I was now looked upon as one critical. To know an actor personally, appeared to me a vice not to be thought of; and I would as lief have taken poison as accepted a ticket from the theatres. Good God! To think of the grand opinion I had of myself in those days, and what little reason I had for it! Not to accept the tickets was very proper, considering that I bestowed more blame than praise. There was also more good-



nature than I supposed in not allowing myself to know any actors; but the vanity of my position had greater weight with me than any thing else, and I must have proved it to discerning eyes by the small quantity of information I brought to my task, and the ostentation with which I produced it. I knew almost as little of the drama, as the young Roscius himself. Luckily I had the advantage of him in knowing how unfit *he* was for his office; and probably he thought me as much so, though he could not have argued upon it; for I was in the minority respecting his merits, and the balance just then trembling on the beam; the "News," I believe, hastened the settlement of the question. I wish with all my heart we had let him alone, and he had got a little more money. However he obtained enough to create him a provision for life. His position, which appeared so brilliant at first, had a remarkable cruelty in it. Most men begin life with struggles, and have their vanity sufficiently knocked about the head and shoulders, to make their kinder fortunes the more welcome. Mr. Betty had his sugar first, and his physic afterwards. He began life with a double childhood, with a new and extraordinary felicity added to the natural enjoyments of his age; and he lived to see it speedily come to nothing, and to be taken for an ordinary person. I am told that he acquiesces in his fate, and agrees that the town were mistaken. If so, he is no ordinary person still, and has as much right to our respect for his good sense, as he is declared on all hands to deserve it for his amiableness. I have an anecdote of him to both purposes which exhibits him in a very agreeable light. A living writer, who, if he had been criticising in another what he did himself, would have attributed it to an overweening opinion of his good word, happened to be at a party where Mr. Betty was present; and in coming away, when they were all putting on their great coats, he thought fit to compliment the dethroned favourite of the town, by telling him that he recollected him in old times, and had been "much pleased with him." Mr. Betty, who appears to have shown all the address which the other wanted, looked at his unlucky memorialist, as much as to say "You don't tell me so!" and then starting into a tragical attitude, exclaimed "Oh, memory! memory!"

I was right about Master Betty, and I am sorry for it; though the town was in fault, not he. I think I was right also about Mr. Kemble; but I have no regret on that score. He flourished long enough after my attacks on his majestic dryness and deliberate nothings; and Mr. Kean would have taken the public by storm, whether they had been prepared for him or not:

“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.”

Mr. Kemble faded before him, like a tragedy ghost. I never denied the merits which that actor possessed. He had the look of a Roman; made a very good ideal, though not a very real Coriolanus, for his pride was not sufficiently blunt and unaffected; and in parts that suited his natural deficiency, such as Penruddock and the Abbé de l'Epée, would have been altogether admirable and interesting, if you could have forgotten that their sensibility, in his hands, was not so much repressed, as wanting. He was no more to be compared to his sister, than stone is to flesh and blood. There was much of the pedagogue in him. He made a great fuss about trifles; was inflexible on a pedantic reading: in short, was rather a teacher of elocution than an actor; and not a good teacher, on that account. There was a merit in his idealism, as far as it went. He had, at least, faith in something classical and scholastic, and he made the town partake of it; but it was all on the surface—a hollow trophy; and I am persuaded, that he was a very dull person, and had no idea in his head but of a stage Roman, and the dignity he added to his profession.

But if I was right about Mr. Kemble, whose admirers I plagued enough, I was not equally so about the living dramatists, whom I plagued more. I laid all the deficiencies of the modern drama to their account, and treated them like a parcel of mischievous boys, of whom I was the schoolmaster and whipper-in. I forgot that it was I who was the boy, and that they knew twenty times more of the world than I did. Not that I mean to say their comedies were excellent, or that my common-places about the superior merits of Congreve and Sheridan were not

well founded: but there was more talent in their “five-act farces” than I supposed; and I mistook, in great measure, the defect of the age,—its dearth of dramatic character,—for that of the writers who were to draw upon it. It is true, a great wit, by a laborious process, and the help of his acquirements, might extract a play or two from it, as was Sheridan’s own case; but there was a great deal of imitation even in Sheridan, and he was fain to help himself to a little originality out of the characters of his less formalized countrymen, his own included. It is remarkable, that the three most amusing dramatists of the last age, Sheridan, Goldsmith, and O’Keeffe, were all Irishmen, and all had characters of their own. Sheridan, after all, was Swift’s Sheridan come to life again in the person of his grandson, with the oratory of Thomas Sheridan, the father, superadded and brought to bear. Goldsmith, at a disadvantage in his breeding, but full of address with his pen, drew upon his own absurdities and mistakes, and filled his dramas with ludicrous perplexity. O’Keeffe was all for whim and impulse, but not without a good deal of conscience; and, accordingly, in his plays we have a sort of young and pastoral taste of life in the very midst of its sophistications. Animal spirits, quips and cranks, credulity, and good intention, are triumphant throughout, and make a delicious mixture. It is a great credit to O’Keeffe, that he ran sometimes close upon the borders of the sentimental drama, and did it not only with impunity but advantage: but sprightliness and sincerity enable a man to do every thing with advantage. It is a pity that as much cannot be said of Mr. Coleman, who, after taking more license in his writings than any body, has become a Licenser *ex officio*, and seems inclined to license nothing but cant. When this writer got into the sentimental, he made a sad business of it, for he had no faith in sentiment. He mouthed and overdid it, as a man does when he is telling a lie. At a farce he was admirable; and remains so, whether writing or licensing. Morton seemed to take a colour from the writers all round him, especially from O’Keeffe and the sentimentalists. His sentiment was more in earnest than Mr. Coleman’s, yet somehow not happy either. There was



a gloom in it, and a smack of the Old Baily. It was best when he put it in a shape of humour, as in the paternal and inextinguishable *tailorism* of Old Rapid in *a Cure for the Heart-Ache*. Young Rapid, who complains that his father "sleeps so slow," is also a pleasant fellow and worthy of O'Keeffe. He is one of the numerous crop that sprang up from *Wild Oats*, but not in so natural a soil. The character of the modern drama at that time was singularly commercial; nothing but gentleman in distress, and hard landlords, and generous interferers, and fathers who got a great deal of money, and sons who spent it. I remember the whole wit of Mr. H——'s play ran upon prices, bonds, and post-obits. You might know what the pit thought of their pound-notes by the ostentatious indifference with which the heroes of the pieces gave them away, and the admiration and pretended approval with which the spectators observed it. To make a present of a hundred pounds was as if a man had uprooted and given away an Egyptian pyramid.

Mr. Reynolds was not behindhand with his brother dramatists, in drawing upon the taste of the day for gains and distresses. It appears, by his *Memoirs*, that he had too much reason for so doing. He was perhaps the least ambitious, and the least vain, (whatever charges to the contrary his animal spirits might have brought on him,) of all the writers of that period. In complexional vivacity he certainly did not yield to any of them; his comedies, if they were fugitive, were genuine representations of fugitive manners, and went merrily to their death; and there is one of them; the "Dramatist," founded upon something more lasting, which promises to remain in the collections, and deserves it: which is not a little to say of any writer. I never wish for a heartier laugh than I have enjoyed, since I grew wiser, not only in seeing, but in reading the vagaries of his dramatic hero, and his mystifications of "Old Scratch." When I read the good-humoured *Memoirs* of this writer the other day, I felt quite ashamed of the ignorant and boyish way in which I used to sit in judgment upon his faults, without being aware of what was good in him;

and my repentance was increased by the very proper manner in which he speaks of his critics, neither denying the truth of their charges in letter, nor admitting them altogether in spirit; in fact, showing that he knew very well what he was about, and that they, whatsoever they fancied to the contrary, did not. Mr. Reynolds, agreeably to his sense and good-humour, never said a word to his critics at the time. Mr. Thomas Dibdin, not quite so wise, wrote me a letter, which Incledon, I am told, remonstrated with him for sending, saying, it would do him no good with the "d—— boy." And he was right. I published it, with an answer; and only thought that I made dramatists "come bow to me." Mr. Coleman attacked me in a prologue, which by a curious chance Fawcett spoke right in my teeth, the box I sat in happening to be directly opposite him. I laughed at the prologue; and only looked upon Mr. Coleman as a great monkey, pelting me with nuts, which I ate. Attacks of this kind were little calculated to obtain their end with a youth who persuaded himself that he wrote for nothing but the public good; who mistook the impression which any body of moderate talents can make with a newspaper, for the result of something peculiarly his own; and who had just enough scholarship to despise the want of it, or what appeared to be the want of it, in others. I do not pretend to think that the criticisms in the "News" had no merit at all. They showed an acquaintance with the style of Voltaire, Johnson, and others; were not unagreeably sprinkled with quotation; and, above all, were written with more care and attention than was customary with newspapers at that time. The pains I took to round a period with nothing in it, or to invent a simile that should appear off-hand, would have done honour to better stuff. On looking over the articles the other day, for the first time perhaps these twenty years, I found them less absurd than I had imagined; and began to fear that, with all their mistakes, my improvement since had not been free from miscalculation. If so, God knows how I should have to criticise myself twenty years hence! But there is a time of life, at which we cannot well experience more, at least so as to draw any healthy and

useful deductions from our experience: and when a man has come to this, he is as wise, after his fashion, as he ever will be. The world require neither the ill-informed confidence of youth, nor the worse diffidence or obstinacy of old age, to teach them; but a comparison of mutual experiences; enough wisdom for acknowledging, that we are none of us as wise or as happy as we might be; and a little more (which is the great point to arrive at) for setting to work and trying if we cannot be otherwise. Methinks we have been beating blindly upon this point long enough, and might as well open our eyes to it.

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THE EXAMINER.—ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S IMPRISONMENT.

At the beginning of the year 1808, my brother John and myself set up the weekly paper of the Examiner, in joint partnership. The spirit of the theatrical criticism continued the same as in the News, for several years; by which time reflection, and the society of better critics, had made me wiser. In politics I soon got interested, as a man; though I never could bear them, as a writer. It was against the grain that I was encouraged to begin them; and against the grain I ever afterwards sat down to write, except when the subject was of a very general description and I could introduce philosophy and the belles lettres. People accused me of conspiring with Cobbett and my gallant namesake, Henry Hunt; when the fact is, I never beheld either of them: so private a public man have I been. I went criminally late to my political article; gave a great deal of trouble to printers and newsmen, for which I am heartily sorry; and hastened back as fast as I could to my verses and books, among which I had scarcely a work upon politics. The progress of society has since deeply interested me, and I should do better now, because I have better learnt the value of time, and politics have taken with me a wider and kindlier aspect: but owing to a dispute of a very painful nature, in which every



body thought himself in the right, and was perhaps more or less in the wrong, I have long ceased to have any hand in the Examiner, and latterly to have any property in it. I shall therefore say nothing more of the paper, except that I was very much in earnest in all I wrote; that I was in a perpetual fluctuation, during the time, of gay spirits and wretched health, which conspired to make me a sensitive observer, and a very bad man of business; and that I think precisely as I did on all subjects when I last wrote in it:—with this difference,—that I am inclined to object to the circumstances that make the present state of society what it is, still more; and to individuals who are the creatures of those circumstances, not at all.

I proceed to the story of my imprisonment; which concerns others as well as myself, and contains some delineations of character; but as it has been told before in the same words, I shall print it with marks of quotation. I need not add, after what has been said at the close of the last paragraph, that the exordium would have been a little different now had it been newly written: but I let it stand, because it was written as conscientiously and with as free a spirit, as it would be written still. I no longer think I have a right to quarrel with individuals or their characters, any more than they have with one's own; and besides objecting to the right or utility of the thing, I have observed that those are loudest against others, who can the least bear to have any thing said of themselves; which is a fault I am willing to value myself upon not being charged with. Enough remains, in all conscience, to oppose and object to, if we prefer our utility to our spleen; and quite enough to show we are independent, and not likely to be bribed.

“Some of my readers may remember that my brother and myself were sentenced to a two years' imprisonment for a libel on the Prince Regent; I say, without hesitation, a libel; since the word means no more, now-a-days, either for a man or against him, than its original signification of ‘a little book.’ Let those thank themselves that such is the case, who by their own confusion of terms and penalties, and their application of one and the same word to the lowest private scandal and

the highest impulses of public spirit, have rendered honest men not ashamed of it. It is remarkable, that the same Whig Judge (Lord Ellenborough) who had directed the Jury to find us innocent on a prior occasion, when we were indicted for saying that ‘of all Monarchs since the Revolution, the successor of George the Third (then reigning) would have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular,’ had now the task of giving them a very different intimation, because we thought that the Regent had not acted up to his opportunities. I was provoked to write the libel by the interest I took in the disappointments of the Irish nation, which had very particular claims on the promises of his Royal Highness; but what, perhaps, embittered it most in the palate of that illustrious Personage, was its contradiction of an awkward panegyric which had just appeared on him from the pen of some foolish person in the ‘Morning Post,’ calling him, at his time of life, a charmer of all hearts and an Adonis of loveliness. At another time, I should have laughed at this in a rhyme or two, and remained free; the courts of law having a judicious instinct against the reading of merry rhymes; but the two things coming together, and the Irish venting their spleen pretty stoutly over their wine at the dinner on St. Patrick’s Day, (indeed they could not well be more explicit, for they groaned and hissed when his name was mentioned,) I wrote an attack equally grave and vehement, and such as every body said would be prosecuted. Little did I foresee, that, in the course of a few years, this same people, the Irish, would burst into an enthusiasm of joy and confidence, merely because the illustrious Personage paid them a visit! I will not say they were rightly served, in finding that nothing came of it, for I do not think so; especially as we are not bound to take the inhabitants of a metropolis as representatives of the wretched millions in other parts of the country, who have since been in worse state than before. But this I may be allowed to say, that if ever I regretted having gone to prison in their behalf, it was then and then only.

“Between the verdict and the passing of sentence, a

circumstance occurred, not of so singular a nature, perhaps, as it may seem. We were given to understand, through the medium of a third person, but in a manner emphatically serious and potential, that if we would abstain in future from commenting upon the actions of the royal Personage, means would be found to prevent our going to prison. The same offer was afterwards repeated, as far as the payment of a fine was concerned, upon our going thither. I need not add, that we declined both. We do not mean to affirm, that these offers came directly or indirectly from the quarter in which they might be supposed to originate; but we know the immediate quarter from which they did come; and this we may affirm, that of all the 'two hundred and fifty particular friends,' who dined on one occasion at Carlton House, and delighted the public with that amazing record of attachment, his Royal Highness had not one more zealous or liberal in his behalf.

"The expectation of a prison was in one respect very formidable to me; for I had been a long time in a bad state of health; and when notice was given that we were to be brought up for judgment, I had just been advised by the physician to take exercise every day on horseback, and go down to the sea-side. I was resolved, however, to do no disgrace either to the courage which I really possessed, or to an example which I can better speak of in any other place than this. I accordingly put my countenance in its best trim: I made a point of wearing my best apparel; put on my new hat and gloves, and descended into the legal arena to be sentenced gallantly. As an instance of the imagination which I am accustomed to mingle with every thing, I was at that time reading a little work, to which Milton is indebted, the *Comus* of Erycius Puteanus; and this, which is a satire on 'Bacchuses and their revellers,' I pleased myself with having in my pocket. It is necessary, on passing sentence for a libel, to read over again the words that composed it. This was the business of Lord Ellenborough, who baffled the attentive audience in a very ingenious manner by affecting every instant to hear a noise, and calling upon the Officers of the court to prevent it. Mr. Garrow, the At-



torney-General, (who had succeeded Sir Vicary Gibbs at a very cruel moment, for the indictment had been brought by that irritable person, and was the first against us which took effect,) behaved to us with a politeness that was considered extraordinary. Not so Mr. Justice Grose, who delivered the sentence. To be didactic and old womanish belonged to his office; but to lecture us on pandering to the public appetite for scandal, was what we could not so easily bear. My brother, as I had been the writer, expected me, perhaps, to be the spokesman; and speak I certainly should have done, had not I been prevented by the dread of a hesitation in my speech, to which I had been subject when a boy, and the fear of which (perhaps idly, for I hesitate least among strangers, and very rarely at all) has been the main cause, I believe, that I have appeared and acted in public less than any other public man. There is reason to think, that Lord Ellenborough was still less easy than ourselves. He knew that we were acquainted with his visits to Carlton House and Brighton, (sympathies not eminently decent in a Judge,) and the good things he had obtained for his kinsmen, and we could not help preferring our feelings at the moment to those which induced him to keep his eyes fixed on his papers, which he did almost the whole time of our being in Court, never turning them once to the place on which we stood. There were divers points besides those, on which he had some reason to fear that we might choose to return the lecture of the Bench. He did not even look at us, when he asked, in the course of his duty, whether it was our wish to make any remarks. I answered, that we did not wish to make any *there*, and Sir Nash proceeded to pass sentence. At the sound of two years' imprisonment in separate jails, my brother and myself instinctively pressed each other's arm. It was a heavy blow: but the pressure that acknowledged it, encouraged the resolution to bear it; and I do not believe either of us interchanged a word afterwards on the subject.

“We parted in hackney-coaches for our respective abodes, accompanied by two tipstaves apiece. I cannot help smiling to think of a third person whom I had with

me, when I contrast his then situation with his present: but he need not be alarmed. I will not do him the injustice either of hurting or recommending him by the mention of his name. He was one of the best-natured fellows in the world, and I dare say he is so still; but, as *Strap* says, 'Non omnia possumus omnes.'

"The tipstaves prepared me for a singular character in my jailer. His name was Ives. I was told he was a very self-willed personage, not the more accommodating for being in a bad state of health, and that he called every body *Mister*. 'In short,' said one of the tipstaves, 'he is one as may be led, but he'll never be *druv*.'

"The sight of the prison-gate and the high wall was a dreary business. I thought of my horseback and the downs of Brighton; but congratulated myself, at all events, that I had come thither with a good conscience. After waiting in the prison-yard as long as if it had been the anteroom of a minister, I was at length ushered into the presence of the great man. He was in his parlour, which was decently furnished, and had a basin of broth before him, which he quitted on my appearance, and rose with much solemnity to meet me. He seemed about fifty years of age; had a white night-cap on, as if he was going to be hung; and a great red face, which looked ready to burst with blood. Indeed, he was not allowed by his physician to speak in a tone above a whisper. The first thing he said was, 'Mister, I'd ha' given a matter of a hundred pounds, that you had not come to this place—a hundred pounds!' The emphasis which he laid on the word 'hundred' was enormous. I forget what I answered. I endeavoured, as usual, to make the best of things; but he recurred over and over again to the hundred pounds; and said he wondered, for his part, what the Government meant by sending me there, for the prison was not a prison fit for a gentleman. He often repeated this opinion afterwards, adding, with a peculiar nod of his head, 'and Mister, they knows it.' I said, that if a gentleman deserved to be sent to prison, he ought not to be treated with a greater nicety than any one else: upon which he corrected me, observing very properly, (though, as the phrase is, it was one word for

the gentleman and two for his own apartments,) that a person who had been used to a better mode of lodging and living than 'low people,' was not treated with the same justice, if forced to live exactly as they did. I told him his observation was very true; which gave him a favourable opinion of my understanding; for I had many occasions of remarking, that, abstractedly considered, he looked upon nobody whomsoever as his superior, speaking even of the members of the Royal Family as persons whom he knew very well, and estimated no more than became him. One Royal Duke had lunched in his parlour, and another he had laid under some polite obligation. 'They knows me,' said he, 'very well, Mister; and, Mister, I knows them.' This concluding sentence he uttered with great particularity and precision. He was not proof, however, against a Greek Pindar, which he happened to light upon one day among my books. Its unintelligible character gave him a notion that he had got somebody to deal with, who might really know something which he did not. Perhaps the gilt leaves and red morocco binding had their share in the magic. The upshot was, that he always showed himself anxious to appear well with me, as a clever fellow, treating me with great civility on all occasions but one, when I made him very angry by disappointing him in a money amount. The Pindar was a mystery that staggered him. I remember very well, that giving me a long account one day of something connected with his business, he happened to catch with his eye the shelf that contained it, and whether he saw it or not, abruptly finished by observing, 'But Mister, you knows all these things as well as I do.' Upon the whole, my new acquaintance was as strange a person as I ever met with. A total want of education, together with a certain vulgar acuteness, conspired to render him insolent and pedantic. Disease sharpened his tendency to violent fits of passion, which threatened to suffocate him; and then in his intervals of better health, he would issue forth, with his cock-up-nose and his hat on one side, as great a fop as a jockey. I remember his coming to my rooms, about the middle of my imprisonment, as if, on purpose to insult over my ill health with the contrast of his own



convalescence, putting his arms in a gay manner a-kimbo, and telling me I should never live to go out, whereas he was riding about as stout as ever, and had just been in the country. He died before I left prison. The word *jail*, in deference to the way in which it is sometimes spelt, he called *gole*; and Mr. Brougham he always spoke of as Mr. *Bruffam*. He one day apologized for this mode of pronunciation, or rather gave a specimen of his vanity and self-will, which will show the reader at once the high notions a jailer may entertain of himself: 'I find,' said he, 'that they calls him *Broom*; but, Mister,' (assuming a look from which there was to be no appeal,) '*I* calls him *Bruffam*!'

"Finding that my host did not think the prison fit for me, I asked if he would let me have an apartment in his house. He pronounced it impossible; which was a trick to enhance the price. I could not make an offer to please him; and he stood out so long, and, as he thought, so cunningly, that he subsequently overreached himself by his trickery; as the readers will see. His object was to keep me among the prisoners, till he could at once sicken me of the place, and get the permission of the magistrates to receive me into his house; which was a thing he reckoned upon as a certainty. He thus hoped to secure himself in all quarters; for his vanity was almost as strong as his avarice; he was equally fond of getting money in private, and of the approbation of the great men he had to deal with in public; and it so happened, that there had been no prisoner, above the poorest condition, before my arrival, with the exception of Colonel Despard. From abusing the prison, he then suddenly fell to speaking well of it, or rather of the room occupied by the Colonel; and said that another corresponding with it would make me a capital apartment. 'To be sure,' said he, 'there is nothing but bare walls, and I have no bed to put in it.' I replied, that of course I should not be hindered from having my own bed from home. He said, 'No; and if it rains,' observed he, 'you have only to put up with want of light for a time.' 'What!' exclaimed I, 'are there no windows?' 'Windows, Mister!' cried he; 'no windows in a prison of this sort; no glass, Mister; but *excellent shutters*!'

“It was finally agreed, that I should sleep for a night or two in a garret of the jailer’s house, till my bed could be got ready in the prison and the windows glazed. A dreary evening followed, which, however, let me completely into the man’s character, and showed him in a variety of lights, some ludicrous and others as melancholy. There was a full-length portrait, in the room, of a little girl, dizen’d out in her best. This, he told me, was his daughter, whom he had disinherited for disobedience. I tried to suggest a few reflections to him, capable of doing her service; but disobedience, I found, was an offence doubly irritating to his nature, on account of his sovereign habits as a jailer; and seeing his irritability likely to inflame the plethora of his countenance, I desisted. Though not allowed to speak above a whisper, he was extremely willing to talk; but at an early hour I pleaded my own state of health, and retired to bed.

“On taking possession of my garret, I was treated with a piece of delicacy, which I never should have thought of finding in a prison. When I first entered its walls, I had been received by the under-jailer, a man who appeared an epitome of all that was forbidding in his office. He was short and very thick, had a hook nose, a great severe countenance, and a bunch of keys hanging on his arm. A friend once stopped short at sight of him, and said, in a melancholy tone, ‘And this is the jailer!’ Honest old *Cave!* thine outside would have been unworthy of thee, if upon farther acquaintance I had not found it a very hearty outside,—ay, and in my eyes, a very good-looking one, and as fit to contain the milk of human kindness that was in thee, as the husk of a cocoa. Was, did I say? I hope it is in thee still; I hope thou art alive to read this paper, and to perform, as usual, a hundred kind offices, as exquisite in their way as they are desirable and unlooked for. To finish at once the character of this man,—I could never prevail on him to accept any acknowledgment of his kindness greater than a set of tea-things, and a piece or two of old furniture which I could not well carry away. I had indeed the pleasure of leaving him in possession of a room I had papered; but this was a thing unexpected, and which neither of us had supposed could be done. Had I been a

Prince, I would have forced on him a pension. Being a journalist, I made him accept an *Examiner* weekly, which, I trust, he still lives to relish his Sunday pipe with.

“ This man, in the interval between my arrival and introduction to the head jailer, had found means to give me farther information respecting my new condition, and to express the interest he took in it. I thought little of his offers at the time. He behaved with the greatest air of deference to his principal; moving as fast as his body would allow him, to execute his least intimation; and holding the candle to him while he read, with an obsequious zeal. But he had spoken to his wife about me, and his wife I found to be as great a curiosity as himself. Both were more like the romantic jailers drawn in some of our modern plays, than real Horsemonger-lane palpabilities. The wife, in her person, was as light and fragile as the husband was sturdy. She had the nerves of a fine lady, and yet went through the most unpleasant duties with the patience of a martyr. Her voice and look seemed to plead for a softness like their own, as if a loud reply would have shattered her. Ill health had made her a Methodist, but this did not hinder her sympathy with an invalid who was none, or her love for her husband, who was as little of a saint as need be. Upon the whole, such an extraordinary couple, so apparently unsuitable, and yet so fitted for one another; so apparently vulgar on one side, and yet so naturally delicate on both; so misplaced in their situation, and yet for the good of others so admirably put there, I have never met with, before or since.

“ It was the business of this woman to lock me up in my garret; but she did it so softly the first night, that I knew nothing of the matter. The night following, I thought I heard a gentle tampering with the lock. I tried it, and found it fastened. She heard me as she was going down stairs, and said the next day, “ Ah, Sir, I thought I should have turned the key, so as for you not to hear it; but I found you did.” The whole conduct of this couple towards us, from first to last, was of a piece with this singular delicacy.



“My bed was shortly put up, and I slept in my new room. It was on an upper story, and stood in a corner of the quadrangle, on the right hand as you enter the prison-gate. The windows (which had now been accommodated with glass, in addition to their “excellent shutters”) were high up, and barred; but the room was large and airy, and there was a fireplace. It was designed for a common room for the prisoners on that story; but the cells were then empty. The cells were ranged on either side of the arcade, of which the story is formed, and the room opened at the end of it. At night-time the door was locked; then another on the top of the staircase, then another on the middle of the staircase, then a fourth at the bottom, a fifth that shut up the little yard belonging to that quarter, and how many more, before you got out of the gates, I forget: but I do not exaggerate when I say there were at least ten or eleven. The first night I slept there, I listened to them, one after the other, till the weaker part of my heart died within me. Every fresh turning of the key seemed a malignant insult to my love of liberty. I was alone, and away from my family; I, who have never slept from home above a dozen times in my life, and then only from necessity. Furthermore, the reader will bear in mind that I was ill. With a great flow of natural spirits, I was subject to fits of nervousness, which had latterly taken a more continued shape. I felt one of them coming on, and having learned to anticipate and break the force of it by sudden exercise, I took a stout walk of I dare say fourteen or fifteen miles, by pacing backwards and forwards for the space of three hours. This threw me into a state in which rest, for rest’s sake, became pleasant. I got hastily into bed, and slept without a dream till morning. By the way, I never dreamt of prison but twice all the time I was there, and my dream was the same on both occasions.

“It was on the second day of my imprisonment that I saw my wife, who could not come to me before. To say that she never reproached me for these and the like taxes upon our family prospects, is to say little. A world of comfort for me was in her face. There is a note in the fifth volume of my Spenser, which I was then

reading, in these words:—‘February 4th, 1813.’ The line to which it refers is this:—

‘Much dearer be the things, which come through hard distresse.’

“I now applied to the magistrates for permission to have my wife and children with me, which was granted. Not so my request to move into the jailer’s house. Mr. Holme Summer, on occasion of a petition from a subsequent prisoner, told the House of Commons, that my room had a view over the Surrey hills, and that I was very well content with it. I could not feel obliged to him for this postliminious piece of enjoyment, especially when I remembered that Mr. Holmes Summer had done all in his power to prevent my removal out of the room, precisely (as it appeared to us) because it looked upon nothing but the felons, and because I was not contented. In fact, you could not see out of the windows at all, without getting on a chair; and then, all that you saw was the miserable men, whose chains had been clanking from daylight. The perpetual sound of these chains wore upon my spirits, in a manner to which my state of health allowed me reasonably to object. The yard also in which I exercised was very small. The jailer proposed that I should be allowed to occupy apartments in his house, and walk occasionally in the prison garden; adding, that I should certainly die if I had not; and his opinion was seconded by that of the medical man. Mine host was sincere in this, if in nothing else. Telling us, one day, how warmly he had put it to the magistrates, and insisted that I should not survive, he turned round upon me, and, to the Doctor’s astonishment, added, ‘nor, Mister, will you.’ I believe it was the opinion of many; but Mr. Holmes Summer argued, perhaps, from his own sensations; which were sufficiently iron. Perhaps he concluded also, like a proper ministerialist, that if I did not think fit to flatter the magistrate a little, and play the courtier, my wants could not be very great. At all events, he came up one day with the rest of them, and after bowing as well as he could to my wife, and piteously pinching the cheek of an infant in her arms, went

down and did all he could to prevent our being comfortably situated.

The Doctor then proposed that I should be removed into the prison infirmary; and this proposal was granted. Infirmary had, I confess, an awkward sound even to my ears. I fancied a room shared with other sick persons, not the best fitted for companions; but the good-natured doctor (his name was Dixon) undeceived me.\* The infirmary was divided into four wards, with as many small rooms attached to them. The two upper wards were occupied, but the two on the ground floor had never been used: and one of these, not very providently (for I had not yet learned to think of money) I turned into a noble room. I papered the walls with a trellis of roses; I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky; the barred windows were screened with Venetian blinds; and when my book-cases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a piano-forte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. The surprise on issuing from the Borough, and passing through the avenues of a jail, was dramatic. Charles Lamb declared there was no other such room except in a fairy tale.

“But I had another surprise; which was a garden. There was a little yard outside the room, railed off from another belonging to the neighbouring ward. This yard I shut in with green palings, adorned it with a trellis, bordered it with a thick bed of earth from a nursery, and even contrived to have a grass-plot. The earth I filled with flowers and young trees. There was an apple-tree, from which we managed to get a pudding the second year. As to my flowers, they were allowed to be perfect. A poet from Derbyshire† told me he had

\* I may venture to speak of him with this grateful epithet, for I verily believe he thought me dying, as he never interchanged a word with me except on the matter in question.

† Thomas Moore; with whom and Lord Byron I was too angry, when I wrote this article, to mention them as visitors of me by name.



seen no such heart's ease. I bought the 'Parnaso Italiano' while in prison, and used often to think of a passage in it, while looking at this miniature piece of horticulture:—

—————Mio picciol orto,  
A me se i vigna, e campo, e selva, e prato.—BALDI:  
—————My little garden,  
To me thou 'rt vineyard, field, and meadow, and wood.

Here I wrote and read in fine weather, sometimes under an awning. In autumn, my trellises were hung with scarlet runners, which added to the flowery investment. I used to shut my eyes in my arm-chair, and affect to think myself hundreds of miles off. But my triumph was in issuing forth of a morning. A wicket out of the garden led into the large one belonging to the prison. The latter was only for vegetables; but it contained a cherry-tree, which I saw twice in blossom.

\* \* \* \* \*

“I entered prison the 3d of February, and removed to my new apartments the 16th of March, happy to get out of the noise of the chains. When I sat amidst my books, and saw the imaginary sky overhead and my paper roses about me, I drank in the quiet at my ears, as if they were thirsty. The little room was my bed-room. I afterwards made the two rooms change characters when my wife lay in. Permission for her continuance with me at that period was easily obtained of the Magistrates, among whom a new-comer made his appearance. This was another good-natured man—the late Earl of Rothes, then Lord Leslie. He heard me with kindness; and his actions did not belie his countenance. The only girl I have among seven children was born in prison.\* I cannot help blessing her when I speak of it. Never shall I forget my sensations: for I was obliged to play the physician myself, the hour having taken us by surprise. But her mother found many unexpected comforts; and during

\* The reader will be good enough to bear in mind, that this account of my imprisonment is quoted from another publication. I have now eight children, three of whom are girls.

the whole time she was in bed, which happened to be in very fine weather, the garden door was set open, and she looked upon the trees and flowers. A thousand recollections rise within me at every fresh period of my imprisonment, such as I cannot trust myself with dwelling upon.

“These rooms, and the visits of my friends, were the bright side of my captivity. I read verses without end, and wrote almost as many. I had also the pleasure of hearing that my brother had found comfortable rooms in Coldbath-fields, and a host who really deserved that name as much as a jailer could. The first year of my imprisonment was a long pull up-hill; but never was metaphor so literally verified, as by the sensation at the turning of the second. In the first year, all the prospect was that of the one coming: in the second, the days began to be scored off, like those of children at school preparing for a holiday. When I was fairly settled in my new apartments, the jailer (I beg pardon of his injured spirit—I ought to have called him Governor) could hardly express his spleen at my having escaped his clutches, his astonishment was so great. Besides, though I treated him handsomely, he had a little lurking fear of the *Examiner* upon him; so he contented himself with getting as much out of me as he could, and boasting of the grand room which he would very willingly have prevented my enjoying. My friends were allowed to be with me till ten o'clock at night, when the under-turnkey, a young man, with his lantern, and much ambitious gentility of deportment, came to see them out. I believe we scattered an urbanity about the prison, till then unknown. Even W. H. (Mr. Hazlitt, who there first did me the pleasure of a visit) would stand interchanging amenities at the threshold, which I had great difficulty in making him pass. I know not which kept his hat off with the greater pertinacity of deference, I to the diffident cutter-up of Dukes and Kings, or he to the amazing prisoner and invalid who issued out of a bower of roses. There came T. B. (my old friend and school-fellow, Barnes,) who always reminds me of Fielding. It was he that introduced me to A. (Alsager) the kindest of neighbours, a man of

business, who contrived to be a scholar and a musician. He loved his leisure, and yet would start up at a moment's notice to do the least of a prisoner's biddings. Other friends are dead since that time, and others gone. I have tears for the kindest of them; and the mistaken shall not be reproached, if I can help it. But what return can I make to the L's (Lambs,) who came to comfort me in all weathers, hail or sunshine, in daylight or in darkness, even in the dreadful frost and snow of the beginning of 1814? I am always afraid of talking about them, lest my tropical temperament should seem to render me too florid. What shall I say to Dr. G. one of the most liberal of a generous profession, who used to come so many times into that out-of-the-way world to do me good? Great disappointment, and exceeding viciousness, may talk as they please of the badness of human nature; for my part, I am on the verge of forty, and I have seen a good deal of the world, the dark side as well as the light, and I say that human nature is a very good and kindly thing, and capable of all sorts of excellence. Art thou not a refutation of all that can be said against it, excellent Sir John Swineburn? another friend whom I made in prison, and whose image, now before my imagination, fills my whole frame with emotion. I could kneel before him and bring his hand upon my head, like a son asking his father's blessing. It was during my imprisonment that another S. (Mr. Shelley) afterwards my friend of friends, now no more, made me a princely offer, which at that time I stood in no need of. I will take this opportunity of mentioning, that some other persons, not at all known to us, offered to raise money enough to pay the fine of £1000. We declined it, with proper thanks; and it became us to do so. But, as far as my own feelings were concerned, I have no merit; for I was destitute, at that time, of even a proper instinct with regard to money. It was not long afterwards that I was forced to call upon friendship for its assistance; and nobly was it afforded me! Why must I not say every thing upon this subject, showing my improvidence for a lesson, and their generosity for a comfort to mankind?—To some

\* I have since said it, in this book.



other friends, near and dear, I may not even return thanks in this place for a thousand nameless attentions, which they make it a business of their existence to bestow on those they love. I might as soon thank my own heart. Their names are trembling on my pen, as that is beating at the recollection. But one or two others, whom I have not seen for years, and who by some possibility (if indeed they ever think it worth their while to fancy any thing on the subject) might suppose themselves forgotten, I may be suffered to remind of the pleasure they gave me. A third S. (M. S. who afterwards saw us so often near London) is now, I hope, enjoying the tranquillity he so richly deserves; and so, I trust, is a fourth, C. S. whose face, or rather something like it (for it was not easy to match her own,) I am continually meeting with in the country of her ancestors. Her veil, and her baskets of flowers, used to come through the portal, like light.

“I must not omit the honour of a visit from the venerable Mr. Bentham, who is justly said to unite the wisdom of a sage with the simplicity of a child. He found me playing at battledore, in which he took a part, and with his usual eye towards improvement, suggested an amendment in the constitution of shuttle-cocks. I remember the surprise of the Governor at his local knowledge and vivacity. ‘Why, Mister,’ said he, ‘his eye is every where at once.’

“It was intimated to me that Mr. Southey intended to pay me a visit. I showed a proper curiosity to see the writer who had helped to influence my opinions in favour of liberty; but, in the mean time, there was a report that he was to be Poet Laureat. I contradicted this report in the *Examiner* with some warmth. Unluckily, Mr. Southey had accepted the office the day before; and the consequence was, he never made his appearance. At this period he did me the honour to compare me with Camille Desmoulins. He has since favoured me with sundry lectures and cuttings-up for adhering to his own doctrine. They say he is not sorry. I am sure I am not; and there is an end of the matter. (Little T. L. H. is his humble servant, but cannot conceive how he has incurred his commiseration.)

“All these comforts were embittered by unceasing ill health, and by certain melancholy reveries, which the nature of the place did not help to diminish. During the first six weeks, the sound of the felons’ chains, mixed with what I always took for horrid execrations or despairing laughter, was never out of my ears. When I went into the Infirmary, which stood by itself between the inner jail and the prison walls, gallowses were occasionally put in order by the side of my windows, and afterwards set up over the prison gates, where they were still visible. The keeper one day, with an air of mystery, took me into the upper ward, for the purpose, he said, of gratifying me with a view of the country from the roof. Something prevented his showing me this; but the spectacle he did show me I shall never forget. It was a stout country girl, sitting in an absorbed manner, her eyes fixed on the fire. She was handsome, and had a little hectic spot in either cheek, the effect of some gnawing emotion. He told me, in a whisper, that she was there for the murder of her bastard child. I could have knocked the fellow down for his unfeelingness in making a show of her: but, after all, she did not see us. She heeded us not. There was no object before her, but what produced the spot in her cheek. The gallows, on which she was executed, must have been brought out within her hearing;—but perhaps she heard that as little. To relieve the reader, I will give him another instance of the delicacy of my friend the under jailer. He always used to carry up her food to the poor girl himself; because, as he said, he did not think it a fit task for younger men. This was a melancholy case. In general, the crimes were not of such a staggering description, nor did the criminals appear to take their situation to heart. I found by degrees, that fortune showed fairer play than I had supposed to all classes of men, and that those who seemed to have most reason to be miserable, were not always so. Their criminality was generally proportioned to their want of thought. My friend Cave, who had become a philosopher by the force of his situation, said to me one day, when a new batch of criminals came in, ‘Poor ignorant wretches, Sir!’ At evening,

when they went to bed, I used to stand in the prison garden, listening to the cheerful songs with which the felons entertained one another. The beaters of hemp were a still merrier race. Doubtless the good hours and simple fare of the prison contributed to make the blood of its inmates run better, particularly those who were forced to take exercise. At last, I used to pity the debtors more than the criminals; yet even the debtors had their gay parties and jolly songs. Many a time (for they were my neighbours) have I heard them roar out the old ballad in Beaumont and Fletcher:—

‘He that drinks and goes to bed sober,  
Falls, as the leaves do, and dies in October.’

To say the truth, there was an obstreperousness in their mirth, that looked more melancholy than the thoughtlessness of the lighter-feeding felons.

On the 3d of February, 1815, I was free. When my family, the preceding summer, had been obliged to go down to Brighton for their health, I felt ready to dash my head against the wall, at not being able to follow them. I would sometimes sit in my chair, with this thought upon me, till the agony of my impatience burst out at every pore. I would not speak of it, if it did not enable me to show how this kind of suffering may be borne, and in what sort of way it terminates. All fits of nervousness ought to be anticipated as much as possible with exercise. Indeed, a proper healthy mode of life would save most people from these effeminate ills, and most likely restore even those who inherit them.— It was now thought that I should dart out of my cage like a bird, and feel no end in the delight of ranging. But partly from ill health, and partly from habit, the day of my liberation brought a good deal of pain with it. An illness of a long standing, which required very different treatment, had by this time been burnt in upon me by the iron that enters into the soul of the captive, wrap it in flowers as he may; and I am ashamed to say, that after stopping a little at the house of my friend A, I had not the courage to continue looking at the shoals of people passing to and fro, as the coach drove up



the Strand. The whole business of life appeared to me a hideous impertinence. The first pleasant sensation I experienced was when the coach turned into the New Road, and I beheld the old hills of my affection standing where they used to do, and breathing me a welcome.

“It was very slowly that I recovered any thing like a sensation of health. The bitterest evil I suffered was in consequence of having been confined so long in one spot. The habit stuck to me, on my return home, in a very extraordinary manner, and made, I fear, some of my friends think me ungrateful. They did me an injustice; but it was not their fault; nor could I wish them the bitter experience which alone makes us acquainted with the existence of strange things. This weakness I outlived; but I have never properly recovered the general shock given my constitution. My natural spirits, however, have always struggled hard to see me reasonably treated. Many things give me exquisite pleasure, which seem to affect other men but in a very minor degree; and I enjoyed, after all, such happy moments with my friends, even in prison, that in the midst of the beautiful climate in which I am now writing,\* I am sometimes in doubt whether I would not rather be there than here.”

On leaving prison, I published the *Story of Rimini*, and became a worse newspaper man than before. Ill health prevented my attending the theatres and writing the theatrical articles; and at length, instead of throwing into the *Examiner* what force remained to me, in some new shape, (as I ought to have enabled myself to do,) I was impelled by necessity to publish a small weekly paper, on the plan of the periodical essayists. From this (though it sold very well for a publication which no pains were taken to circulate) I reaped more honour than profit; and the *Indicator* (*I fear*) is the best of my works:—so hard is it for one who has grown up in the hope of being a poet, to confess that the best things he has done have been in prose. The popularity of that

\* This account was written in Italy.

work, however, evinced by the use made of it in others, and, above all, the good opinion expressed of it by such men as Mr. Lamb and Mr. Hazlitt, have long served to reconcile me to this discovery. I have more than consoled myself by thinking that it is not impossible it may be found some day or other in the train of a body of writers, among whom I am "proud to be less;" and it has enabled me perhaps to come to a true estimate of my station as an author, which I take to be somewhere between the prose of those town-writers and the enthusiasm of the old poets; not, indeed, with any thing like an approach to the latter, except in my love of them; nor with any pretence to know half as much of wit and the town as the former did; but not altogether unoriginal in a combination of the love of both, nor in the mixed colours of fancy and familiarity which it has enabled me to throw over some of the common-places of life. But enough of this attempt at a self-estimate, always perhaps difficult, and, at any rate, sure to be disputed. There are things I care more for in the world than myself, let me be thought of as I may. So I proceed to new adventures.

## THE AUTHOR'S VISIT TO ITALY, RESIDENCE THERE, AND RETURN TO ENGLAND.

THE reader has seen what it was that induced me to take a voyage to Italy. It was not very discreet to go many hundred miles by sea in winter-time with a large family; but a voyage was thought cheaper than a journey by land. Even that, however, was a mistake. It was by Shelley's advice that I acted: and, I believe, if he had recommended a balloon, I should have been inclined to try it. "Put your music and your books on board a vessel," (it was thus that he wrote to us,) "and you will have no more trouble." The sea was to him a pastime; he fancied us bounding over the waters, the merrier for being tossed; and thought that our will would carry us through any thing, as it ought to do, seeing that we brought with us nothing but good things,—books, music, and sociality. It is true, he looked to our coming in autumn, and not in winter; and so we should have done, but for the delays of the captain. We engaged to embark in September, and did not set off till November the 16th.

I have often thought that a sea-voyage, which is generally the dullest thing in the world, both in the experiment and the description, might be turned to very different account on paper, if the narrators, instead of imitating the dulness of their predecessors, and recording that it was four o'clock P. M. when they passed Cape St. Vincent, and that on such and such-a-day they beheld a porpus or a Dutchman, who would look into the interior of the floating-house they inhabited, and tell us about the seamen and their modes of living; what adventures they



have had,—their characters and opinions,—how they eat, drink, and sleep, &c. ; what they do in fine weather, and how they endure the sharpness, the squalidness, and inconceivable misery of bad. With a large family around me to occupy my mind, I did not think of this till too late: but I am sure that this mode of treating the subject would be interesting; and what I remember to such purpose, I will set down.

Our vessel was a small brig of a hundred and twenty tons burden, a good tight sea-boat, nothing more. Its cargo consisted of sugar; but it took in also a surreptitious stock of gunpowder, to the amount of fifty barrels, which was destined for Greece. Of this intention we knew nothing, till the barrels were sent on board from a place up the river; otherwise, so touchy a companion would have been objected to, my wife, who was in a shattered state of health, never ceasing to entertain apprehensions on account of it; except when the storms that came upon us presented a more obvious peril. There were nine men to the crew, including the mate. We numbered as many souls, though with smaller bodies, in the cabin, which we had entirely to ourselves; as well we might, for it was small enough. On the afternoon of the 15th of November (1821,) we took leave of some dear friends, who accompanied us on board; and next morning were awakened by the motion of the vessel, making its way through the shipping in the river. The new life in which we thus, as it were, found ourselves enclosed, the clanking of iron, and the cheerly cries of the seamen, together with the natural vivacity of the time of day, presenting something animating to our feelings; but while we thus moved off, not without encouragement, we felt that the friend whom we were going to see was at a great distance, while others were very near, whose hands it would be a long while before we should touch again, perhaps never. We hastened to get up and busy ourselves; and great as well as small found a novel diversion in the spectacle that presented itself from the deck, our vessel threading its way through the others with gliding bulk.

The next day it blew strong from the South-east, and

even in the river (the navigation of which is not easy) we had a foretaste of the alarms and bad weather that awaited us at sea. The pilot, whom we had taken in overnight, (and who was a jovial fellow with a whistle like a blackbird, which, in spite of the dislike that sailors have to whistling, he was always indulging,) thought it prudent to remain at anchor till two in the afternoon; and at six, a vessel meeting us carried away the jibboom, and broke in one of the bulwarks. My wife, who had a respite from the most alarming part of her illness, and whom it was supposed a sea-voyage, even in winter, might benefit, again expectorated blood with the fright; and I began to regret that I had brought my family into this trouble.—Even in the river we had a foretaste of the sea; and the curse of being at sea to a landsmen is, that you know nothing of what is going forward, and can take no active part in getting rid of your fears, or in “lending a hand.” The business of these small vessels is not carried on with the orderliness and tranquillity of greater ones, or of men-of-war. The crew are not very wise; the captain does not know how to make them so; the storm roars; the vessel pitches and reels; the captain, over your head, stamps and swears, and announces all sorts of catastrophes. Think of a family hearing all this, and parents in alarm for their children!

On Monday, the 19th, we passed the Nore, and proceeded down Channel amidst rains and squalls. We were now out at sea; and a rough taste we had of it. I had been three times in the Channel before, once in hard weather; but I was then a bachelor, and had only myself to think of. Let the reader picture to his imagination the little back-parlour of one of the shops in Fleet Street, or the Strand, attached or let into a great moving vehicle, and tumbling about the waves from side to side, now sending all the things that are loose this way, and now that. This will give him an idea of a cabin at sea, such as we occupied. It had a table fastened down in the middle; places let in to the walls on each side, one over the other, to hold beds; a short, wide, sloping window, carried off over a bulk, and looking out to sea; a bench or locker, running under the bulk from one side

of the cabin to the other; and a little fireplace opposite, in which it was impossible to keep a fire on account of the wind. The weather at the same time, was bitterly cold, as well as wet. On one side the fireplace was the door, and on the other a door leading into a petty closet dignified with the title of the state-room. In this room we put our servant, the captain sleeping in another closet outside. The births were occupied by the children, and my wife and myself lay, as long as we could manage to do so, on the floor. Such was the trim, with boisterous wet weather, cold days, and long evenings, on which we set out on our sea-adventure.

At six o'clock in the evening of the 19th, we came to in the Downs, in a line with Sandown Castle. The wind during the night increasing to a gale, the vessel pitched and laboured considerably; and the whole of the next day it blew a strong gale, with hard squalls from the westward. The day after, the weather continuing bad, the captain thought proper to run for Ramsgate, and took a pilot for that purpose. Captains of vessels are very unwilling to put into harbour, on account of the payment they have to make, and the necessity of supporting the crew for nothing while they remain. Many vessels are no doubt lost on this account; and a wonder is naturally expressed, that men can persist in putting their lives into jeopardy in order to save a few pounds. But when we come to know what a seaman's life is, we see nothing but the strongest love of gain (whether accompanied or not by love of spending) could induce a man to take a voyage at all; and he is naturally anxious to save, what he looks upon as the only tangible proof, that he is not the greatest fool in existence. His life, he thinks, is in God's keeping; but his money is in his own. To be sure, a captain who has been to sea fifty times, and has got rich by it, will go again, storms or vows to the contrary notwithstanding, because he does not know what to do with himself on shore; but unless he had the hope of adding to his stock, he would blunder into some other way of business, rather than go, as he would think, for nothing. Occupation is his real necessity, as it is that of other money-getters; but the



mode of it, without the visible advantage, he would assuredly give up. I never met with a seaman (and I have put the question to several) who did not own to me, that he hated his profession. One of them, a brave and rough subject, told me, that there was not a "pickle" of a midshipman, not absolutely a fool, who would not confess that he had rather eschew a second voyage, if he had but the courage to make the avowal.

I know not what the Deal pilot, whom we took on board in the Downs, thought upon this point; but if ever there was a bold fellow, it was he; and yet he could eye a squall with a grave look. I speak not so much from what he had to do on the present occasion, though it was a nice business to get us into Ramsgate harbour: but he had the habit of courage in his face, and was altogether one of the most interesting-looking persons I have seen. The Deal boatmen are a well known race; revered for their matchless intrepidity, and the lives they have saved. Two of them came on board the day before, giving opinions of the weather, which the captain was loath to take, and at the same time insinuating some little contraband notions, which he took better. I thought how little these notions injured the fine manly cast of their countenances, than which nothing could be more self-possessed and even innocent. They seemed to understand the first principles of the thing, without the necessity of inquiring into it; their useful and noble lives standing them in stead of the pettier ties and sophisms of the interested. Our pilot was a prince, even of his race. He was a tall man in a kind of frock-coat, thin but powerful, with high features, and an expression of countenance fit for an Argonaut. When he took the rudder in hand, and stood alone, guiding the vessel towards the harbour, the crew being all busied at a distance from him, and the captain, as usual, at his direction, he happened to put himself into an attitude the most graceful as well as commanding conceivable; and a new squall coming up in the horizon, just as we were going to turn in, he gave it a look of lofty sullenness, threat, as it were, for threat,—which was the most magnificent aspect of resolution I ever beheld. Expe-

rience and valour assumed their rights, and put themselves on a par with danger. In we turned, to the admiration of the spectators who had come down to the pier, and to the satisfaction of all on board, except the poor captain, who, though it was his own doing, seemed, while gallantly congratulating the lady, to be eyeing, with side-long pathos, the money that was departing from him

We stopped, for a change of weather, nearly three weeks at Ramsgate, where we had visits from more than one London friend, to whom I only wish we could give a tenth part of the consolation when they are in trouble, which they afforded us. At Ramsgate I picked up Condorcet's *View of the Progress of Society*, which I read with a transport of gratitude to the author, though it had not entered so deeply into the matter as I supposed. But the very power to persevere in hopes for mankind, at a time of life when individuals are in the habit of reconciling their selfishness and fatigue by choosing to think ill of them, is a great good in any man, and achieves a great good if it acts only upon one other person. A few such instances of perseverance would alter the world. For some days we remained on board, as it was hoped that we should be enabled to set sail again. Ramsgate harbour is very shallow; and though we lay in the deepest part of it, the vessel took to a new and a ludicrous species of dance, grinding and thumping upon the chalky ground. The consequence was, that the metal pintles of the rudder were all broken, and new ones obliged to be made; which the sailors told us was very lucky, as it proved the rudder not to be in good condition, and it might have deserted us at sea. We lay next a French vessel, smaller than our own, the crew of which became amusing subjects of remark. They were always whistling, singing, and joking. The men shaved themselves elaborately, and cultivated heroic whiskers; strutting up and down, when at leisure, with their arms folded, and the air of naval officers. A woman or two, with kerchiefs and little curls, completed the picture. They all seemed very merry and good-humoured. At length, tired of waiting on board, we took a quiet lodging at the

other end of the town, and were pleased to find ourselves sitting still, and secure of a good rest at night. It is something, after being at sea, to find oneself not running the fork in one's eye at dinner, or suddenly sliding down the floor to the other end of the room. My wife was in a very weak state; but the rest she took was deep and tranquil, and I resumed my walks. Few of the principal bathing-places have any thing worth looking at in the neighbourhood, and Ramsgate has less than most. Pegwell Bay is eminent for shrimps. Close by is Sir William Garrow, and a little farther on is Sir William Curtis. The sea is a grand sight, but it becomes tiresome and melancholy,—a great monotonous idea. I was destined to see it grander, and dislike it more.

On Tuesday the 11th of December, we set forth again, in company with nearly a hundred vessels, the white sails of which, as they shifted and presented themselves in different quarters, made an agreeable spectacle, exhibiting a kind of noble minuet. My wife was obliged to be carried down to the pier in a sedan; and the taking leave, a second time, of a dear friend, rendered our new departure a melancholy one. I would have stopped and waited for summer-time, had not circumstances rendered it advisable for us to persevere; and my wife herself fully agreed with me, and even hoped for benefit, as well as a change of weather. Unfortunately, the promise to that effect lasted us but a day. The winds recommenced the day following, and there ensued such a continuity and vehemence of bad weather as rendered the winter of 1821 memorable in the shipping annals. It strewed the whole of the north-western coasts of Europe with wrecks. The reader may remember that winter: it was the one in which Mount Hecla burst out again into flame, and Dungeness lighthouse was struck with lightning. The mole at Genoa was dilapidated. Next year there were between 14 and 15,000 sail less upon Lloyd's books; which, valued at an average at £1500, made a loss of two millions of money;—the least of all the losses, considering the feelings of survivors. Fifteen hundred sail (colliers) were wrecked on the single coast of Jutland.



Of this turmoil we were destined to have a sufficient experience; and I will endeavour to give the reader a taste of it, as he sits comfortably in his arm-chair. He has seen what sort of cabin we occupied. I will now speak of the crew and their mode of living, and what sort of trouble we partook in common. He may encounter it himself afterwards if he pleases, and it may do him good; but again I exhort him not to think of taking a family with him.

Our captain, who was also proprietor of the vessel, had been master of a man-of-war, and was more refined in his manners than captains of small merchantmen are used to be. He was a clever seaman, or he would not have occupied his former post; and I dare say he conducted us well up and down Channel. The crew, when they were exhausted, accused him of a wish of keeping us out at sea, to save charges,—perhaps unjustly; for he became so alarmed himself, or was so little able to enter into the alarms of others, that he would openly express his fears before my wife and children. He was a man of connexions superior to his calling; and the consciousness of this, together with success in life, and a good complexion and set of features which he had had in his time, rendered him, though he was getting old, a bit of a coxcomb. When he undertook to be agreeable, he assumed a cleaner dress, and a fidgetty sort of effeminacy, which contrasted very ludicrously with his old clothes and his doleful roughness during a storm. While it was foul weather, he was roaring and swearing at the men, like a proper captain of a brig, and then grumbling and saying, “Lord bless us and save us!” in the cabin. If a glimpse of promise re-appeared, he put on a coat and aspect to correspond, was constantly putting compliments to the lady, and telling stories of other fair passengers whom he had conveyed charmingly to their destination. He wore powder; but this not being sufficient always to conceal the colour of his hair, he told us it had turned grey when he was a youth, from excessive fright in being left upon a rock. This confession made me conclude that he was a brave man, in spite of his exclamations. I saw him among his kindred, and he appeared to be an object

of interest to some respectable maiden sisters, whom he treated kindly, and for whom all the money, perhaps, that he scraped together, was intended. He was chary of his "best biscuit," but fond of children; and was inclined to take me for a Jonah for not reading the Bible, while he made love to the maid-servant. Of such incongruities are people made, from the Great Captain to the small.

Our mate was a tall handsome young man, with a countenance of great refinement for a seaman. He was of the humblest origin: yet a certain gentility was natural in him, as he proved by a hundred little circumstances of attention to the women and children, when consolation was wanted, though he did not do it ostentatiously or with melancholy. If a child was afraid, he endeavoured to amuse him with stories. If the women asked him anxiously how things were going on, he gave them a cheerful answer; and he contrived to show by his manner that he did not do so in order to make a show of his courage at their expense. He was attentive without officiousness, and cheerful with quiet. The only fault I saw in him, was a tendency to lord it over a Genoese boy, an apprentice to the captain, who seemed ashamed of being among the crew, and perhaps gave himself airs. But a little tyranny will creep into the best natures, if not informed enough, under the guise of a manly superiority; as may be seen so often in upper boys at school. The little Genoese was handsome, and had the fine eyes of the Italians. Seeing he was a foreigner, when we first went on board, we asked him whether he was not an Italian. He said, no; he was a Genoese. It is the Lombards, I believe, that are more particularly understood to be Italians, when a distinction of this kind is made; but I never heard it afterwards. He complained to me one day that he wanted books and *poetry*; and said that the crew were a "*brutta gente*." I afterwards met him in Genoa, when he looked as gay as a lark, and was dressed like a gentleman. His name was a piece of music,—Luigi Rivarola. There was another foreigner on board, a Swede, as rough a subject and Northern, as the Genoese was full of the "sweet South." He had the reputation of being a capital seaman, which enabled him to

grumble to better advantage than the others. A coat of the mate's, hung up to dry, in a situation not perfectly legal, was not to be seen by him without a comment. The fellow had an honest face withal, but brute and fishy, not unlike a Triton's in a picture. He gaped up at a squall, with his bony look, and the hair over his eyes, as if he could dive out of it in case of necessity. Very different was a fat, fair-skinned carpenter, with a querulous voice, who complained on all occasions, and in private was very earnest with the passengers to ask the captain to put into port. And very different again from him was a jovial straightforward seaman, a genuine Jack Tar, with a snub nose and an under lip thrust out, such as we see in caricatures. He rolled about with the vessel, as if his feet had suckers; and he had an oath and a jest every morning for the bad weather. He said he would have been "d——d" before he had come to sea this time, if he had known what sort of weather it was to be; but it was not so bad for him, as for the gentlefolks with their children.

The crew occupied a little cabin at the other end of the vessel, into which they were tucked in their respective cribs, like so many herrings. The weather was so bad, that a portion of them, sometimes all, were up at night, as well as the men on watch. The business of the watch is to see that all is safe, and to look out for vessels ahead. He is very apt to go to sleep, and is sometimes waked with a pail of water chucked over him. The tendency to sleep is very natural, and the sleep in fine weather delicious. Shakspeare may well introduce a sailor boy sleeping on the top-mast, and enjoying a luxury that wakeful kings might envy. But there is no doubt that the luxury of the watcher is often the destruction of the vessel. The captains themselves, glad to get to rest, are careless. When we read of vessels run down at sea, we are sure to find it owing to negligence. This was the case with regard to the steam-vessel, the *Comet*, which excited so much interest the other day. A passenger, anxious and kept awake, is surprised to see the eagerness with which every seaman, let the weather be what it may, goes to bed when it comes to his turn. Safety, if they can have it; but sleep at all events. This seems to be their motto. If they are to be drowned,



they would rather have the two beds together, the watery and the worsted. Dry is too often a term inapplicable to the latter. In our vessel, night after night, the wet penetrated into the seamen's births; and the poor fellows, their limbs stiff and aching with cold, and their hands blistered with toil, had to get into beds as wretched as if a pail of water had been thrown over them.

Such were the lives of our crew from the 12th till the 22d of December, during which time we were beaten up and down Channel, twice touching the Atlantic, and driven back again like a hunted ox. One of the gales lasted, without intermission, fifty-six hours; blowing all the while, as if it would "split its cheeks." The oldest seaman on board had never seen rougher weather in Europe. In some parts of the world, both East and West, there is weather of sudden and more outrageous violence; but none of the crew had experienced tempests of longer duration, nor more violent for the climate. The worst of being at sea in weather like this, next to your inability to do any thing, is the multitude of petty discomforts with which you are surrounded. You can retreat into no comfort, great or small. Your feet are cold; you can take no exercise on account of the motion of the vessel; and a fire will not keep in. You cannot sit in one posture. You lie down, because you are sick; or if others are more sick, you must keep your legs as well as you can, to help them. At meals, the plates and dishes slide away, now to this side, now that; making you laugh, it is true; but you laugh more of satire than merriment. Twenty to one you are obliged to keep your beds, and chuck the cold meat to one another; or the oldest and strongest does it for the rest, desperately remaining at table, and performing all the slides, manœuvres, and sudden rushes, which the fantastic violence of the cabin's movements has taught him. Tea, (which, for the refreshment it affords in toil and privation, may be called the traveller's wine) is taken as desperately as may be, provided you can get boiling water; the cook making his appearance, when he can, with his feet asunder, clinging to the floor, and swaying to and fro with the kettle. (By the by, I have not mentioned our cook; he was a Mulatto, a merry

knave, constantly drunk. But the habit of drinking, added to a quiet and sly habit of uttering his words, had made it easy to him to pretend sobriety when he was most intoxicated; and I believe he deceived the whole of the people on board, except ourselves. The captain took him for a special good fellow, and felt particularly grateful for his refusals of a glass of rum; the secret of which was, he could get at the rum whenever he liked, and was never without a glass of it in his œsophagus. He stood behind you at meals, kneading the floor with his feet; as the vessel rolled; drinking in all the jokes, or would-be jokes, that were uttered; and laughing like a dumb goblin. The captain, who had eyes for nothing but what was the right before him, seldom noticed his merry devil; but if you caught his eye, there he was, shaking his shoulders without a word, while his twinkling eyes seemed to run over with rum and glee. This fellow, who swore horrid oaths in a tone of meekness, used to add to my wife's horrors by descending, drunk as he was, with a lighted candle into the "Lazaret," which was a hollow under the cabin, opening with a trap-door, and containing provisions and a portion of the gunpowder. The portion was small, but sufficient, she thought, with the assistance of his candle, to blow us up. Fears for her children occupied her mind from morning till night, when she sank into an uneasy sleep. While she was going to sleep I read, and did not close my eyes till towards morning, thinking (with a wife by my side, and seven children around me) what I should do in case of the worst. My imagination, naturally tenacious, and exasperated by ill health, clung, not to every relief, but to every shape of ill that I could fancy. I was tormented with the consciousness of being unable to divide myself into as many pieces as I had persons requiring assistance; and must not scruple to own that I suffered a constant dread, which appeared to me very unbecoming a man of spirit. However, I expressed no sense of it to any body. I did my best to do my duty and keep up the spirits of those about me; and your nervousness being a great dealer in your joke fantastic, I succeeded apparently with all, and certainly with

the children. The most uncomfortable thing in the vessel was the constant wet. Below it penetrated, and on deck you could not appear with dry shoes but they were speedily drenched. Mops being constantly in use at sea, (for seamen are very clean in that respect, and keep their vessel as nice as a pet infant,) the sense of wet was always kept up, whether in wetting or drying; and the vessel, tumbling about, looked like a wash-house in a fit. We had a goat on board, a present from a kind friend, anxious that we should breakfast as at home. The storms frightened away its milk, and Lord Byron's dog afterwards bit off its ear. But the ducks had the worst of it. These were truly a sight to make a man hypochondriacal. They were kept in miserable narrow coops, over which the sea constantly breaking, the poor wretches were drenched and beaten to death. Every morning, when I came upon deck, some more were killed, or had their legs and wings broken. The captain grieved for the loss of his ducks, and once went so far as to add to the number of his losses by putting one of them out of its misery; but nobody seemed to pity them otherwise. This was not inhumanity, but want of thought. The idea of pitying live-stock when they suffer, enters with as much difficulty into a head uneducated to that purpose, as the idea of pitying a diminished piece of beef, or a stolen pig. I took care not to inform the children how much the creatures suffered. My family, with the exception of the eldest boy, who was of an age to acquire experience, always remained below; and the children, not aware of any danger, (for I took care to qualify what the captain said, and they implicitly believed me) were as gay, as confinement and uneasy beds would allow them to be. With the poor ducks I made them outrageously merry one night, by telling them to listen when the next sea broke over us, and they would hear Mr. P, an acquaintance of theirs, laughing. The noise they made with their quacking, when they gathered breath after the suffocation of the salt water, was exactly like what I said: the children listened, and at every fresh agony there was a shout. Being alarmed one night by the captain's open expression of his apprehension, I prepared the children for the worst that might happen,



by telling them that the sea sometimes broke into a cabin, and then there was a dip over head and ears for the passengers, after which they laughed and made merry. The only time I expressed apprehension to any body was to the mate, one night when we were wearing ship off the Scilly rocks, and every body was in a state of anxiety. I asked him, in case of the worst, to throw open the lid of the cabin-stairs, that the sea might pour in upon us as fast as possible. He begged me not to have any sad thoughts, for he said I should give them to him, and he had none at present. At the same time, he turned and severely rebuked the carpenter, who was looking doleful at the helm, for putting notions into the heads of the passengers. The captain was unfortunately out of hearing.

I did wrong, at that time, not to "feed better," as the phrase is. My temperance was a little ultra-theoretical and excessive; and the mate and I were the only men on board who drank no spirits. Perhaps there were not many men out in those dreadful nights in the Channel, who could say as much. The mate, as he afterwards let me know, felt the charge upon him too great to venture upon an artificial state of courage; and I feared that what courage was left me, might be bewildered. The consequence was, that from previous illness and constant excitation, my fancy was sickened into a kind of hypochondriacal investment and shaping of things about me. A little more, and I might have imagined the fantastic shapes which the action of the sea is constantly interweaving out of the foam at the vessel's side, to be sea-snakes, or more frightful hieroglyphics. The white clothes that hung up on pegs in the cabin, took, in the gloomy light from above, an aspect like things of meaning; and the winds and rain together, as they ran blind and howling along by the vessel's side, when I was on deck, appeared like frantic spirits of the air, chasing and shrieking after one another, and tearing each other by the hair of their heads. "The grandeur of the glooms" on the Atlantic was majestic indeed; the healthiest eye would have seen them with awe. The sun rose in the morning, at once fiery and sicklied over; a livid gleam played on the water, like the reflection of lead; then

the storms would recommence; and during partial clearings off, the clouds and fogs appeared standing in the sky, moulded into gigantic shapes, like antediluvian wonders, or visitants from the zodiac; mammoths, vaster than have yet been thought of; the first ungainly and stupendous ideas of bodies and legs, looking out upon an unfinished world. These fancies were ennobling, from their magnitude. The pain that was mixed with some of the others, I might have displaced by a fillip of the blood.

Two days after we left Ramsgate, the wind blowing violently from the south-west, we were under close-reefed topsails; but on its veering to westward, the captain was induced to persevere, in hopes that by coming round to the north-west, it would enable him to clear the Channel. The ship laboured very much, the sea breaking over her; and the pump was constantly going.

The next day, the 14th, we shipped a great deal of water, the pump going as before. The fore-topsail and foresail were taken in, and the storm staysail set; and the captain said we were "in the hands of God." We now wore ship to southward.

On the 15th, the weather was a little moderated, with fresh gales and cloudy. The captain told us to-day how his hair turned white in a shipwreck; and the mate entertained us with an account of the extraordinary escape of himself and some others from an American pirate, who seized their vessel, plundered and made it a wreck, and confined them under the hatches, in the hope of their going down with it. They escaped in a rag of a boat, and were taken up by a Greek vessel, which treated them with the greatest humanity. The pirate was afterwards taken, and hung at Malta, with five of his men. This story, being tragical without being tempestuous, and terminating happily for our friend, was very welcome, and occupied us agreeably. I tried to get up some ghost stories of vessels, but could hear of nothing but the Flying Dutchman: nor did I succeed better on another occasion. This dearth of supernatural adventure is remarkable, considering the superstition of sailors. But their wits are none of the liveliest to be acted upon; and then the sea blunts while it mystifies, and the sai-

lor's imagination, driven in, like his body, to the vessel he inhabits, admits only the petty wonders that come directly about him in the shape of storm-announcing fishes and birds. His superstition is that of a blunted and not of an awakened ignorance. Sailors had rather sleep than see visions.

On the 16th, the storm was alive again, with strong gales and heavy squalls. We set the fore storm stay-sail anew, and at night the jolly-boat was torn from the stern.

The afternoon of the 17th brought us the gale that lasted fifty-six hours, "one of the most tremendous," the captain said, "that he had ever witnessed." All the sails were taken in, except the close-reefed topsail and one of the trysails. At night, the wind being at south-west, and Scilly about fifty miles north by east, the trysail sheet was carried away, and the boom and sail had a narrow escape. We were now continually wearing ship. The boom was unshipped, as it was; and it was a melancholy sight to see it lying next morning, with the sail about it, like a wounded servant who had been fighting. The morning was occupied in getting it to rights. At night we had hard squalls with lightning.

We lay to under main-topsail until the next morning, the 19th, when at ten o'clock we were enabled to set the reefed foresail, and the captain prepared to run for Falmouth; but finding he could not get in till night, we hauled to the wind, and at three in the afternoon wore ship to south-westward. It was then blowing heavily; and the sea, breaking over the vessel, constantly took with it a part of the bulwark. I believe we had long ceased to have a duck alive. The poor goat had contrived to find itself a corner in the long-boat, and lay frightened and shivering under a piece of canvass. I afterwards took it down in the cabin to share our lodging with us; but not having a birth to give it, it passed but a sorry time, tied up and slipping about the floor. At night we had lightning again, with hard gales, the wind being west and north-west, and threatening to drive us on the French coast. It was a grand thing, through the black and turbid atmosphere, to see the great fiery eye of the lighthouse at the Lizard Point; it looked like a good genius with a ferocious aspect. Ancient mythology would have



made dragons of these noble structures,—dragons with giant glare, warning the seaman off the coast.

The captain could not get into Falmouth: so he wore ship and stood to the westward with fresh hopes, the wind having veered a little to the north; but, after having run above fifty miles to the south and west, the wind veered again in our teeth, and at two o'clock on the 20th, we were reduced to a close-reefed main-topsail, which, being new, fortunately held, the wind blowing so hard that it could not be taken in without the greatest risk of losing it. The sea was very heavy, and the rage of the gale tremendous, accompanied with lightning. The children on these occasions slept, unconscious of their danger. My wife slept too, from exhaustion. I remember, as I lay awake that night, looking about to see what help I could get from imagination, to furnish a moment's respite from the anxieties that beset me, I cast my eyes on the poor goat; and recollecting how she devoured some choice biscuit I gave her one day, I got up, and going to the cupboard took out as much as I could find, and occupied myself in seeing her eat. She munched the fine white biscuit out of my hand, with equal appetite and comfort; and I thought of a saying of Sir Philip Sidney's, that we are never perfectly miserable when we can do a good-natured action.

I will not dwell upon the thoughts that used to pass through my mind respecting my wife and children. Many times, especially when a little boy of mine used to weep in a manner equally sorrowful and good-tempered, have I thought of Prospero and his infant Miranda in the boat—"me and thy crying self;" and many times of that similar divine fragment of Simonides, a translation of which, if I remember, is to be found in the "Adventurer." It seemed as if I had no right to bring so many little creatures into such jeopardy, with peril to their lives and all future enjoyment; but sorrow and trouble suggested other reflections too:—consolations, which even to be consoled with is calamity. However, I will not recall those feelings any more. Next to tragical thoughts like these, one of the modes of tormenting oneself at sea, is to raise those pleasant pictures of contrast dry and firm-footed, which our friends are enjoying in their warm rooms and radiant

security at home. I used to think of them one after the other, or several of them together, reading, chatting, and laughing, playing music, or complaining that they wanted a little movement and much dance; then retiring to easy beds amidst happy families; and perhaps, as the wind howled thinking of us. Perhaps, too, they thought of us sometimes in the midst of their merriment, and longed for us to share it with them. That they did so, is certain; but, on the other hand, what would we not have given to be sure of the instant at which they were making these reflections; and how impossible was it to attain to this, or to any other dry-ground satisfaction! Sometimes I could not help smiling to think how Munden would have exclaimed, in the character of Croaker, "We shall all be blown up!" The gunpowder I seldom thought of. I had other fish to *fry*: but it seemed to give my feet a sting sometimes, as I remembered it in walking the deck. The demand for dry land was considerable. That is the point with landsmen at sea;—something unwet, unconfined, but, above all, firm, and that enables you to take your own steps, physical and moral. Panurge has it somewhere in Rabalais, but I have lost the passage.

But I must put an end to this unseasonable mirth.—"A large vessel is coming right down upon us;—lights—lights!" This was the cry at eleven o'clock at night, on the 21st December, the gale being tremendous, and the sea to match. Lanthorns were handed up from the cabin, and, one after the other, put out. The captain thought it was owing to the wind and the spray; but it was the drunken steward, who jolted them out as he took them up the ladder. We furnished more, and contrived to see them kept in; and the captain afterwards told me that we were the salvation of his vessel. The ship, discerning us just in time, passed ahead, looking very huge and terrible. Next morning, we saw her about two miles on our lee-bow, lying to under trysails. It was an Indiamen. There was another vessel, a smaller, near us in the night. I thought the Indiamen looked very comfortable, with its spacious and powerful body: but the captain said we were better off a great deal in our own sea-boat; which turned out to be true, if this was the same Indiamen, as some thought it, which was lost the night following off

the coast of Devonshire. The crew said, that in one of the pauses of the wind they heard a vessel go down. We were at the time very near land. At tea-time the keel of our ship grated against something, perhaps a shoal. The captain afterwards very properly made light of it; but at the time, being in the act of raising a cup to his mouth, I remember he turned prodigiously grave, and, getting up, went upon deck.

Next day, the 22nd, we ran for Dartmouth, and luckily succeeding this time, found ourselves, at 12 o'clock at noon, in the middle of Dartmouth harbour.—

“Magno telluris amore

Egressi, optata potiuntur Troes arena.”

“The Trojans, worn with toils, and spent with woes,

Leap on the welcome land, and seek their wish'd repose.”

Dryden had never been at sea, or he would not have translated the passage in that meek manner. Virgil knew better; and besides, he had the proper ancient hydrophobia to endear his fancy to the dry ground. He says, that the Trojans had got an absolute *affection* for *terra firma*, and that they now enjoyed what they had longed for. Virgil, it must be confessed, talks very tenderly of the sea for an epic poet. Homer grapples with it in a very different style. The Greek would hardly have recognized his old acquaintance Æneas in that pious and frightened personage, who would be designated, I fear, by a modern sailor, a psalm-singing milksop. But Homer, who was a traveller, is the only poet among the ancients, who speaks of the sea in a modern spirit. He talks of brushing the waves merrily; and likens them, when they are dark, to his Chian wine. But Hesiod, though he relates with a modest grandeur that he had once been to sea, as far as from Aulis to Chalcis, is shocked at the idea of any body's venturing upon the water except when the air is delicate and the water harmless. A spring voyage distresses him, and a winter he holds to be senseless. Moschus plainly confesses, that the very sight of the ocean makes him retreat into the woods; the only water he loves being a fountain to listen to, as he lies on the grass. Virgil took a trip to Athens, during which he may be supposed to have undergone all the horrors which



he holds to be no disgrace to his hero. Horace's distress at his friend's journey, and amazement at the hardhearted rascal who could first venture to look upon the sea on ship-board, are well known. A Hindoo could not have a greater dread of the ocean. Poor Ovid, on his way to the place of his exile, wonders how he can write a line. These were delicate gentlemen at the court of Augustus; and the ancients, it may be said, had very small and bad vessels, and no compass. But their moral courage appears to have been as poor in this matter as their physical. Nothing could have given a Roman a more exalted idea of Cæsar's courage, than his famous speech to the pilot:—"You carry Cæsar and his fortunes!" The poets, who take another road to glory, and think no part of humanity alien from them, spoke out in a different manner. Their office being to feel with all, and their nature disposing them to it, they seem to think themselves privileged to be bold or timid, according to circumstances; and doubtless they are so, imagination being the moving cause in both instances. They perceive also, that the boldest of men are timid under circumstances in which they have no experience; and this helps the agreeable insolence of their candour. Rochester said, that every man would confess himself a coward, if he had but courage enough to do so;—a saying worthy of an ingenious debauchee, and as false with respect to individuals, as it is perhaps true with regard to the circumstances under which any one may find himself. The same person who shall turn pale in a storm at sea, shall know not what it is to fear the face of a man; and the most fearless of sailors shall turn pale (as I have seen them do) even in storms of an unusual description. I was once in a scuffle with a party of fishermen on the Thames, when, in the height of their brutal rage, they were checked and made civil by the mention of the word *law*. Rochester talked like the shameless coward that he had made himself; but even Sir Philip Sidney, the flower of chivalry, who would have gone through any danger out of principle, (which, together with the manly habits that keep a man brave, is the true courage,) does not scruple to speak, with a certain dread, of ships and their strange lodgings.

"Certainly," says he, in his "Arcadia," (Book II.)

there is no danger carries with it more horror, than that which grows in those floating kingdoms. For that dwelling-place is unnatural to mankind; and then the terribleness of the continual motion, the desolation of the far being from comfort, the eye and the ear having ugly images ever before them, doth still vex the mind, even when it is best armed against it."

Ariosto, a soldier as well as poet, who had fought bravely in the wars, candidly confesses that he is for taking no sea voyages, but is content to explore the earth with Ptolemy, and travel in a map. This, he thinks, is better than putting up prayers in a storm. (*Satire 3. Chi vuol andar intorno, &c.*) But the most amusing piece of candour on this point is that of Berni, in his "*Orlando Innamorato*," one of the models of the Don Juan style. Berni was a good fellow, for a rake; and bold enough, though a courtier, to refuse aiding a wicked master in his iniquities. He was also stout of body, and a great admirer of stout achievements in others, which he dwells upon with a masculine relish. But the sea he cannot abide. He probably got a taste of it in the Adriatic, when he was at Venice. He is a fine describer of a storm, and puts a hero of his at the top of one in a very elevated and potent manner: (See the description of Rodomonte, at the beginning of one of his cantos.) But in his own person, he disclaims all partnership with such exaltations; and earnestly exhorts the reader, on the faith of his experience, not to think of quitting dry land for an instant.

"Se vi poteste un uomo immaginare,  
Il qual non sappia quel che sia paura;  
E se volete un bel modo trovare  
Da spaventar ogni anima sicura;  
Quando e fortuna, mettetel' in mare.  
Se non lo teme, se non se ne cura,  
Colui per pazzo abbiate, e non ardito,  
Perch' è diviso da la morte un dito.

"E un' orribil cosa ilmar crociato:  
E meglio udirlo, che farne la prova.  
Creda ciascun a chi dentro v' è stato;  
E per provar, diterra non si mova."

*Canto 64, st. 4.*

Reader, if you suppose that there can be,  
In nature, one that's ignorant of fear;

And if you'd show the man, as prettily  
 As possible, how people can feel queer,—  
 When there's a tempest, clap him in the sea.  
 If he's not frightened, if he doesn't care,  
 Count him a stupid idiot, and not brave,  
 Thus with a straw betwixt him and the grave.

A sea in torment is a dreadful thing :  
 Much better lie and listen to, than try it.  
 Trust one who knows its desperate pummelling :  
 And while on *terra firma*, pray stick by it.

Full of Signor Berni's experience, and having, in the shape of our children, seven more reasons than he had to avail ourselves of it, we here bade adieu to our winter voyage, and resolved to put forth again in a better season. It was a very expensive change of purpose, and cost us more trouble than I can express; but I had no choice, seeing my wife was so ill. A few days afterwards, she was obliged to have forty ounces of blood taken from her at once, to save her life.

Dartmouth is a pretty, forlorn place, deserted of its importance. Chaucer's "Schippman" was born there, and it still produces excellent seaman; but, instead of its former dignity as a port, it looks like a petty town deserted of its neighbourhood, and left to grow wild and solitary. The beautiful vegetation immediately about it, added to the bare hills in the background, completes this look of forlornness, and produces an effect like that of the grass growing in the streets of a metropolis. The harbour is landlocked with hills, and wood, and a bit of an old castle at the entrance; forming a combination very picturesque. Among the old families remaining in that quarter, the Prideaux, relations of the ecclesiastical historian, live in this town; and going up a solitary street on the hill-side; I saw on a door the name of Wolcot, a memorandum of a different sort. Peter Pindar's family, like the divine's, are from Cornwall.

We left Dartmouth, where no ships were in the habit of sailing for Italy, and went to Plymouth; intending to set off again with the beginning of spring, in a vessel bound for Genoa. But the mate of it, who, I believe, grudged us the room we should deprive him of, contrived to tell my wife a number of dismal stories, both of the



ship and its captain, who was an unlucky fellow that seemed marked by fortune. Misery had also made him a Calvinist,—the most miserable of all ways of getting comfort; and this was no additional recommendation. To say the truth, having a pique against my fears on the former occasion, I was more bent on allowing myself to have none on the present; otherwise, I should not have thought of putting forth again till the fine weather was complete. But the reasons that prevailed before, had now become still more imperative; my wife being confined to her bed, and undergoing repeated bleedings: so, till summer we waited. Plymouth is a proper modern commercial town, unpicturesque in itself, with an overgrown superb, or dock, which has become a town distinct, and other suburbs carrying other towns along the coast. But the country up the river is beautiful; and Mount-Edgcombe is at hand, with its enchanted island, like a piece of old poetry by the side of new money-getting. Lord Lyttleton, in some pretty verses, has introduced the gods, with Neptune at their head, and the nymphs of land and sea, contesting for the proprietorship of it;—a dispute which Jupiter settles by saying, that he made Mount-Edgcombe for them all. But the best compliment paid it was by the Duke de Medina Sidonia, admiral of the Spanish Armada, who, according to Fuller, marked it out from the sea, as his territorial portion of the booty. “But,” says Fuller, “he had caught a great cold, had he had no other clothes to wear than those which were to be made of a skin of a bear not killed.” In the neighbourhood is a seat of the Carews, the family of the historian of Cornwall, and kinsmen of the poet. Near it, on the other side of the river, was the seat of the Killigrews; another family which became celebrated in the annals of wit and poetry.\* The tops of the two mansions looked at one another over the trees. In the grounds of the former is a bowling-green, the scene of a once fashionable amusement, now grown out of use; which is a pity. Fashion cannot too much identify itself with what is healthy; nor has England been “merry England,” since late hours and pallid faces came into vogue. But our sedentary thoughts,

\* *Worthies of England*, Vol. i. p. 208. Edit. 1811.

it is to be hoped, will help to their own remedy, and in the end leaves us better off than before.

The sea upon the whole had done me good, and I found myself able to write again, though by driblets. We lived very quietly at Stonehouse, opposite Mount-Edgecumbe, nursing our hopes for a new voyage, and expecting one of a very different complexion in sailing towards an Italian summer. My wife kept her bed almost the whole time, and lost a great deal of blood; but the repose, together with the sea-air, was of service to her, and enabled her to receive benefit on resuming our journey. Thus quietly we lived, and thus should have continued, agreeably to both of our inclinations; but some friends of the Examiner heard of our being in the neighbourhood, and the privatest of all public men (if I may be ranked among the number) found myself complimented by his readers, face to face, and presented with a silver cup. I then had a taste of the Plymouth hospitality, and found it friendly and cordial to the last degree, as if the seaman's atmosphere gave a new spirit to the love of books and liberty. Nor, as the poet would say, was music wanting; nor fair faces, the crown of welcome. Besides the landscapes in the neighbourhood, I had the pleasure of seeing some beautiful ones in the painting-room of Mr. Rogers, a very clever artist and intelligent man, who has travelled, and can think for himself. But my great Examiner friend, who has since become a personal one, was Mr. Hine, now master of an academy near the Metropolis, and the most attentive and energetic person of his profession that I ever met with. My principal visitors indeed at Plymouth consisted of schoolmasters;—one of those signs of the times, which has not been so ill regarded since the accession of a lettered and liberal minister to the government of this country, as they were under the supercilious ignorance, and (to say the truth) well-founded alarm of his footman-like predecessors.

The Devonshire people, as far as I had experience of them, were pleasant and good-humoured. Queen Elizabeth said of their gentry, that they were "all born courtiers with a becoming confidence." I know not how that may be, though she had a good specimen in Sir Wal-

ter Raleigh, and a startling one in Stukely.\* But the private history of modern times might exhibit instances of natives of Devonshire winning their way into regard and power by the force of a well constituted mixture of sweet and strong; and it is curious, that the milder climate of that part of England should have produced more painters, perhaps, of a superior kind, than any other two counties can show. Drake, Jewel, Hooker, and old Fortesque, were also Devonshire-men; William Browne, the most genuine of Spenser's disciples; and Gay, the enjoying and the good-hearted, the natural man in the midst of the sophisticate.

We left Plymouth on the 13th of May 1822, accompanied by some of our new friends who would see us on board; and set sail in a fresh vessel, on our new summer voyage, a very different one from the last. Short acquaintances sometimes cram as much into their intercourse, as to take the footing of long ones; and our parting was not without pain. Another shadow was cast on the female countenances by the observation of our boatman, who though an old sailor who ought to have known better, bade us remark how heavily laden our ship was, and how deep she lay in the water: so little can ignorance afford to miss an opportunity of being important. Our new captain, and, I believe, all his crew, were Welsh, with the exception of one sailor, an unfortunate Scotchman, who seemed pitched among them to have his nationality put to the torture. Jokes were unceasingly cracked on the length of his person, the oddity of his dialect, and the uncouth manner in which he stood at the helm. It was a new thing to hear Welshman cutting up the barbarism of "Modern Athens;" but they had the advantage of the poor fellow in wit, and he took it with a sort of sulky patience, that showed he was not destitute of one

\* See his wild history in Fuller, p. 284, as above. "So confident was his ambition," says the biographer, "that he blushed not to tell Queen Elizabeth, that he preferred rather to be sovereign of a mole-hill, than the highest subject to the greatest king in Christendom; adding, moreover, that he was assured he should be a prince before his death. 'I hope,' said Queen Elizabeth, 'that I shall hear from you when you are stated in your principality.'—'I will write unto you,' quoth Stukely.—'In what language?' said the Queen. He returned, 'In the syle of princes—*To our Dear Sister.*'"



part of the wisdom of his countrymen. To have made a noise would have been to bring down new shouts of laughter; so he pocketed the affronts as well as he might, and I could not help fancying that his earnings lay in the same place more securely than most of those about him. The captain was choleric and *brusque*, a temperament which was none the better for an inclination to plethora; but his enthusiasm in behalf of his brother tars, and the battles they had fought, was as robust as his frame; and he surprised me with writing verses on the strength of it. Very good *heart* and *impart* verses they were too, and would have cut as good a figure as any in one of the old magazines. While he read them, he rolled the r's in most rugged style, and looked as if he could have run them down the throats of the enemy. The objects of his eulogy he called "our gallant *herroes*."

We took leave of Plymouth with a fine wind at North-east; and next day, on the confines of the Channel, spoke the Two Sisters, of Guernsey, from Rio Janeiro. On a long voyage, ships lose their longitude; and our information enabled the vessel to enter the Channel with security. Ships approaching and parting from one another, present a fine spectacle, shifting in the light, and almost looking conscious of the grace of their movements. Sickness here began to prevail again among us, with all but myself, who am never sea-sick. I mention it in order to notice a pleasant piece of thanks which I received from my eldest boy, who, having suffered dreadfully in the former voyage, was grateful for my not having allowed him to eat butter in the interval. I know not whether my paternity is leading me here into too trifling a matter; but I mention the circumstance, because there may be intelligent children among my readers, with whom it may turn to account.

We were now on the high Atlantic, with fresh health and hopes, and the prospect of an easy voyage before us. Next night, the 15th, we saw, for the first time, two grampuses, who interested us extremely with their unwieldly gambols. They were very large,—in fact, a small kind of whale; but they played about the vessel like kittens, dashing round, and even under it, as if in scorn of its progress. The swiftness of fish is inconceivable. The ~~smallest~~ of them must be enormously strong: the largest

are as gay as the least. One of these grampuses fairly sprang out of the water, bolt upright. The same day, we were becalmed in the Bay of Biscay—a pleasant surprise. A calm in the Bay of Biscay, after what we had read and heard of it, sounded to us like repose in a boiling caldron. But a calm, after all, is not repose: it is a very unresting and unpleasant thing, the ship taking a great gawky motion from side to side, as if playing the buffoon; and the sea heaving in huge oily looking fields, like a carpet lifted. Sometimes it looks striped into great ribbons; but the sense of it is always more or less unpleasant, and to impatient seamen must be torture.

The next day we were still becalmed. A small shark played all day long about the vessel, but was shy of the bait. The sea was swelling, and foul with putrid substances, which made us think what it would be if a calm continued a month. Mr. Coleridge has touched upon that matter, with the hand of a master, in his “Ancient Mariner.” (Here are three words in one sentence beginning with *M* and ending with *R*; to the great horror of Mr. Wordsworth, provided he does me the honour of reading me. But the compliment to Mr. Coleridge shall be the greater, since it is at my own expense.) During a calm, the seamen, that they may not be idle, are employed in painting the vessel:—an operation that does not look well amidst the surrounding aspect of sickness and faintness. The favourite colours are black and yellow; I believe, because they are the least expensive. They are certainly the most ugly.

On the 17th, we had a fine breeze at north-east. There is great enjoyment in a beautiful day at sea. You quit all the discomforts of your situation for the comforts; interchange congratulations with the seamen, who are all in good humour; seat yourself at ease on the deck, enjoy the motion, the getting on, the healthiness of the air; watch idly for new sights; read a little, or chat, or give way to a day-dream; then look up again, and expatiate on the basking scene around you, with its ripples blue or green, and gold,—what the old poet beautifully calls *the innumerable smile* of the waters.

“Ποντίων τε κυμάτων

Ληγεῖσμον γέλασμα.”

*Fromethous Vinctus.*

The appearance of another vessel sets conjecture alive:—it is “a Dane,” “a Frenchman,” “a Portuguese,” and these words have a new effect upon us, as if we became intimate with the country to which they belong. A more striking effect of the same sort is produced by the sight of a piece of land;—it is Flamborough Head, Ushant, Cape Ortegal:—you see a part of another country, one perhaps on which you have never set foot; and this is a great thing: it gives you an advantage: others have *read* of Spain or Portugal; you have *seen* it, and are a grown man and a traveller, compared with those little children of books. These novelties affect the dull-est; but to persons of any imagination, and such as are ready for any pleasure or consolation that nature offers them, they are like pieces of a new morning of life. The world seems begun again, and our stock of knowledge recommencing on a new plan.

Then at night-time, there are those beautiful fires on the water by the vessel's side, upon the nature of which people seem hardly yet agreed. Some take them for animal decay, some for living animals, others for electricity. Perhaps all have to do with it. In a fine blue sea, the foam caused by the vessel at night, seems full of stars: the white ferment, with the golden sparkles in it, is beautiful beyond conception. You look over, and devour it with your eyes, as you would so much ethereal syllabub. Finally, the stars in the firmament issue forth, and the moon, always the more lovely the farther you get south; or when there is no moon on the sea, the shadows at a little distance become grander and more solemn, and you watch for some huge fish to lift himself in the middle of them,—a darker mass, breathing and spouting water.

The fish appear very happy. Some are pursued, indeed, and others pursue; there is a world of death as well as life going on. The mackarel avoids the porpus, and the porpus eschews the whale; there is the sword-fish, who runs a-muck; and the shark, the cruel scavenger. These are startling common-places: but it is impossible, on reflection, to separate the idea of happiness from that of health and activity. The fishes are not sick or sophisticated; their blood is pure, their strength and agility



prodigious; and a little peril, for aught we know, may serve to keep them moving, and give a relish to their vivacity. I looked upon the sea as a great tumbling wilderness, full of sport. To eat fish at sea, however, hardly looked fair, though it was the fairest of occasions: it seemed as if, not being an inhabitant, I had no right to the produce. I did not know how the dolphins might take it. At night-time, lying in a bed beneath the level of the water, I fancied sometimes that a fellow looked at me as he went by with his great side-long eyes, gaping objection. It was strange, I thought, to find oneself moving onward cheek by jowl with a porpus, or yawning in concert with a shark.

On the 21st, after another two days of calm, and one of rain, we passed Cape Finisterre. There was a heavy swell and rolling. Being now on the Atlantic, with not even any other name for the part of it that we sailed over to interrupt the wildest association of ideas, I thought of America, and Columbus, and the chivalrous squadrons that set out from Lisbon, and the old Atlantis of Plato, formerly supposed to exist off the coast of Portugal. It is curious, that the Portuguese have a tradition to this day, that there is an island occasionally seen off the coast of Lisbon. The story of the Atlantis looks like some old immemorial tradition of a country that has really existed; nor is it difficult to suppose that there was formerly some great tract of land, or even continent, occupying these now watery regions, when we consider the fluctuation of things, and those changes of dry to moist, and of lofty to low, which are always taking place all over the globe. Off the coast of Cornwall, the mariner, it has been said, now rides over the old country of Lyones, or whatever else it was called, if that name be fabulous; and there are stories of doors and casements, and other evidences of occupation, brought up from the bottom. These indeed have lately been denied, or reduced to nothing: but old probabilities remain. In the Eastern seas, the gigantic work of creation is visibly going on, by means of those little creatures, the coral worms; and new lands will as assuredly be inhabited there after a lapse of centuries, as old ones have vanished in the West.

“So, in them all, *raignes mutabilitie.*”

22. Fine breeze to-day from the N.E. A great shark went by. One longs to give the fellow a great dig in the mouth. Yet he is only going “on his vocation.” Without him, as without the vultures on land, something would be amiss. It is only moral pain and inequality which it is desirable to alter,—that which the mind of man has an invincible tendency to alter.

To-day the seas reminded me of the “*marmora pelagi*” of Catullus. They looked, at a little distance, like blue water petrified. You might have supposed, that by some sudden catastrophe, the great ocean had been turned into stone; and the mighty animals, whose remains we find in it, fixed there for ever. A shoal of porpuses broke up the fancy. Waves might be classed, as clouds have been; and more determination given to pictures of them. We ought to have waves and wavelets, billows, fluctuosities, &c., a marble sea, a sea weltering. The sea varies its look at the immediate side of the vessel, according as the progress is swift or slow. Sometimes it is a crisp and rapid flight, hissing; sometimes an interweaving of the foam in snake-like characters; sometimes a heavy weltering, shouldering the ship on this side and that. In what is called “the trough of the sea,” which is a common state to be in during violent weather, the vessel literally appears stuck and labouring in a trough, the sea looking on either side like a hill of yeast. This was the gentlest sight we used to have in the Channel; very different from our summer amenities.

A fine breeze all night, with many porpuses. Porpuses are supposed to portend a change of weather, of some sort, bad or good: they are not prognosticators of bad alone. At night there was a “young May moon,” skimming between the dark clouds, like a slender boat of silver. I was upon deck, and found the watcher fast asleep. A vessel might have tipped us all into the water, for any thing that he knew, or perhaps cared. There ought to be watchers on board ship, exclusively for that office. It is not to be expected that sailors, who have been up and at work all day, should not sleep at night, especially out in the air. It is as natural to these chil-

dren of the sea, as to infants carried out of doors. The sleeper, in the present instance, had a pail thrown over him one night, which only put him in a rage, and perhaps make him sleep out of spite next time. He was a strong, hearty Welsh lad, healthy and good-looking, in whose veins life coursed it so happily, that, in order to put him on a par with less fortunate constitutions, fate seemed to have brought about a state of warfare between him and the captain, who thought it absolutely necessary to be always giving him the rope's end. Poor John used to dance and roar with the sting of it, and take care to deserve it better next time. "He was unquestionably "very aggravating," as the saying is; but, on the other hand, the rope was not a little provoking.

23. A strong breeze from the N. and N.E., with clouds and rain. The foam by the vessel's side was full of those sparkles I have mentioned, like stars in clouds of froth. On the 24th, the breeze increased, but the sky was fairer, and the moon gave a light. We drank the health of a friend in England, whose birth-day it was; being great observers of that part of religion. The 25th brought us beautiful weather, with a wind right from the north, so that we ran down the remainder of the coast of Portugal in high style. Just as we desired it too, it changed to N.W., so as to enable us to turn the Strait of Gibraltar merrily. Cape St. Vincent, (where the battle took place,) just before you come to Gibraltar, is a beautiful lone promontory jutting out upon the sea, and crowned with a convent: it presented itself to my eyes the first thing when I came upon deck in the morning,—clear, solitary, blind-looking; feeling, as it were, the sea air and the solitude for ever, like something between stone and spirit. It reminded me of a couplet, written not long before, of

—"Ghastly castle, that eternally  
Holds its blind visage out to the lone sea."

Such things are beheld in one's day-dreams, and we almost stare to find them real. Between the Cape and Gibraltar were some fisherman, ten or twelve in a boat, fishing with a singular dancing motion of the line. These were the first "Southrons" we had seen in their own do-



main; and they interested us accordingly. One man took off his cap. In return for this politeness, the sailors joked them in bad Portuguese, and shouted with laughter at the odd sound of their language when they replied. A seaman, within his ship and his limited horizon, thinks he contains the whole circle of knowledge. Whatever gives him a hint of any thing else, he looks upon as absurdity; and is the first to laugh at his own ignorance, without knowing it, in another shape. That a Portuguese should not be able to speak English, appears to him the most ludicrous thing in the world; while on his part, he affects to think it a condescension to speak a few rascally words of Portuguese, though he is in reality very proud of them. The more ignorance and inability, the more pride and intolerance. A servant-maid whom we took with us to Italy, could not "abide" the disagreeable sound of Tuscan; and professed to change the word *grazie* into *grochy*, because it was prettier.

All this corner of the Peninsula is rich in ancient and modern interest. There is Cape St. Vincent, just mentioned; Trafalgar, more illustrious; Cadiz, the city of Geryon; Gibraltar, and the other pillar of Hercules; Atlantis, Plato's Island, which he puts hereabouts; and the Fortunate Islands, Elysian Fields, or Gardens of the Hesperides, which, under different appellations, and often confounded with one another, lay in this part of the Atlantic, according to Pliny. Here, also, if we are to take Dante's word for it, Ulysses found a grave, not unworthy of his life in the "Odyssey." Milton ought to have come this way from Italy, instead of going twice through France: he would have found himself in a world of poetry, the unaccustomed grandeur of the sea keeping it in its original freshness, unspoilt by the common-places that beset us on shore: and his descriptions would have been still finer for it. It is observable, that Milton does not deal much in descriptions of the ocean, a very epic part of poetry. He has been at Homer and Appollonius, more than at sea. In one instance, he is content with giving us an ancient phrase in one half of his line, and a translation of it in the other:

"On the clear hyaline,—the glassy sea."

The best describer of the sea, among our English poets, is Spenser, who was conversant with the Irish Channel. Shakspeare, for an inland poet, is wonderful; but his astonishing sympathy with every thing, animate, and inanimate, made him lord of the universe, without stirring from his seat. Nature brought her shows to him like a servant, and drew back for his eye the curtains of time and place. Milton and Dante speak of the ocean as of a great plain. Shakspeare talks as if he had ridden upon it, and felt its unceasing motion.

“The *still-vext* Bermoothes.”

What a *presence* is there in that epithet! He draws a rocky island with its waters about it, as if he had lived there all his life; and he was the first among our dramatists to paint a sailor,—as he was to lead the way in those national caricatures of Frenchmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen.

“You, by whose aid,”

says Prospero,—

“Weak masters though ye be, I have be-dimmed  
The noon-tide sun, called forth the mutinous winds,  
And ’twixt the green sea and the azur’d vault  
Set roaring war.”

He could not have said it better, had he been buffeted with all the blinding and shrieking of a Channel storm. As to Spenser, see his comparisons of “billows in the Irish sounds;” his

“World of waters, wide and deep,”

in the first book,—much better than “the ocean floor” (*suol marino*) of Dante; and all the sea-pictures, both fair and stormy, in the wonderful twelfth canto of Book the Second, with its fabulous ichthyology, part of which I must quote here for the pleasure of poetical readers: for the seas ought not to be traversed without once adverting to these other shapes of their terrors—

“All dreadful pourtraicts of deformitie;  
Spring-headed hydras, and *sea-shouldering* whales;  
Great whirl-pooles which all fishes make to flee;

Bright scolopendras, armed with silver scales ;  
Mighty monoceros with immeasured tayles.\*

“The dreadful fish that hath *deserved* the name  
Of Death, and like him looks in dreadful hew ;  
The griesly wasserman, that makes his game  
The flying ships with swiftness to pursue ;  
The horrible sea-satyre, that doth shew  
His fearfull face in time of greatest storm ;  
Huge ziffius, whom mariners eschew  
No less than rocks, as travellers informe ;

(How he loads his verses with a weight of apprehension, as if it was all real!)

And greedy rosmarines, with visages deforme.

“All these, and thousand thousands many more,  
And more deformed monsters, thousand-fold,  
With dreadful noise and hollow rumbling rore  
Came rushing, in the fomy waves enroll’d,  
Which seemed to fly, for feare them to behold.  
No wonder if these did the knight appall ;  
For all that here on earth we dreadfull hold,  
Be but as bugs to fearen babes withall,  
Compared to the creatures in the sea’s entrall.”

Five *dreadfulls* in the course of three stanzas, and not one too many, any more than if a believing child were talking to us.

Gibraltar has a noble look, tall, hard, and independent. But you do not wish to live there:—it is a fortress, and an insulated rock, and this is but a prison. The inhabitants feed luxuriously, with the help of their fruits and smugglers.

The first sight of Africa is an achievement. Voyagers in our situation are obliged to be content with a mere sight of it; but that is much. They have seen another quarter of the globe. “Africa!” They look at it, and repeat the word, till the whole burning and savage territory, with its black inhabitants and its lions, seems put into their possession. Ceuta and Tangier bring the old Moorish times before you; “Ape’s Hill,” which is pointed out, sounds fantastic and remote, “a wilderness of monkies;” and as all shores, on which you do not clearly distinguish objects, have a solemn and ro-

\* This is the *smisurato* of the Italians. In the “Orlando Innamorato,” somebody comes riding on a *smisurato cavallone*, an immeasurable horse.



mantic look, you get rid of the petty effect of those vagabond Barbary States that occupy the coast, and think at once of Africa, the country of deserts and wild beasts, the "dry-nurse of lions;" as Horace, with a vigour beyond himself, calls it.

At Gibraltar you first have a convincing proof of the rarity of the southern atmosphere, in the near look of the Straits, which seem but a few miles across, though they are thirteen.

But what a crowd of thoughts face one on entering the Mediterranean! Grand as the sensation is, in passing through the classical and romantic memories of the sea off the western coast of the Peninsula, it is little compared with this. Countless generations of the human race, from three quarters of the world, with all the religions, and the mythologies, and the genius, and the wonderful deeds, good and bad, that have occupied almost the whole attention of mankind, look you in the face from the galleries of that ocean-floor, rising one above another, till the tops are lost in heaven. The water at your feet is the same water that bathes the shores of Europe, of Africa, and of Asia,—of Italy and Greece, and the Holy Land, and the lands of chivalry and romance, and pastoral Sicily, and the Pyramids, and old Crete, and the Arabian city of Al Cairo, glittering in the magic lustre of the Thousands and One Nights. This soft air in your face, comes from the grove of "Daphne by Orontes;" these lucid waters, that part from before you like oil, are the same from which Venus arose, pressing them out of her hair. In that quarter Vulcan fell—

"Dropt from the zenith like a falling star :"

and there is Circe's Island, and Calypso's, and the promontory of Plato, and Ulysses wandering, and Cymon and Miltiades fighting, and Regulus crossing the sea to Carthage, and

"Damasco and Morocco, and Trebisond;  
And whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,  
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell  
By Fontarabia."

The mind hardly separates truth from fiction in thinking of all these things, nor does it wish to do so. Fiction is Truth in another shape, and gives us close em-

braces. You may shut a door upon a ruby, and render it of no colour; but the colour shall not be the less enchanting for that, when the sun, the poet of the world, touches it with his golden pen. What we glow at and shed tears over, is as real as love and pity,

At night the moon arose in a perfection of serenity, and restored the scene to the present moment. I could not help thinking, however, of Anacreon (Poets are of all moments,) and fancying some connexion with moonlight in the very sound of that beautiful verse in which he speaks of the vernal softness of the waves;—

“Apalunetai galene.”

I write the verse in English characters, that every reader may taste it.

All our Greek beauties why should schools engross?

I used to feel grateful to Fielding and Smollett, when a boy, for writing their Greek in English. It is like catching a bit of a beautiful song, though one does not know the words.

27. Almost a calm. We proceeded at no greater rate than a mile an hour. I kept repeating to myself the word *Mediterranean*; not the word in prose, but the word in verse, as it stands at the beginning of the line;

“And the sea  
*Mediterranean.*”

We saw the mountains about Malaga, topped with snow. Velez Malaga is probably the place at which Cervantes landed on his return from captivity at Algiers. (See *Don Quixote*, Vol. ii. p. 208. Sharpe's edition.) I had the pleasure of reading the passage, while crossing the line betwixt the two cities. It is something to sail by the very names of Granada and Andalusia. There was a fine sunset over hills of Granada. I imagined it lighting up the Alhambra. The clouds were like great wings of gold and yellow and rose-colour, with a smaller minute sprinkle in one spot, like a shower of glowing stones from a volcano. You see very faint imitations of such lustre in England. A heavy dew succeeded; and a contrary wind at south-east, but very mild. At night, the reflexion of the moon on the water was like silver snakes.

We had contrary winds for several days in succession, but nothing to signify after our winter. On the 28th we saw a fire at night on the coast of Granada, and similar lights on the hills. The former was perhaps made by smugglers, the latter in burning charcoal or heath. A gull came to us next day, hanging in the air, like the dove in the picture, a few yards distance from the try-sail, and occasionally dipping in the water for fish. It had a small head, and long beak, like a snipe's; wings tipped with black. It reminded us of Mr. Coleridge's poem; which my eldest boy, in the teeth of his father's rhymes, has the impudence to think (now, as he did then) the finest poem in the world. We may say of the "Ancient Mariner," what is only to be said of the very finest poems, that it is equally calculated to please the imaginations of the most childlike boy and the profoundest man; extremes, which meet in those superhuman, places; and superhuman, in a sense exquisitely human, as well as visionary. I believe Mr. Coleridge's young admirer would have been as much terrified at shooting this albatross, as the one the poet speaks of; not to mention that he could not be quite sure it was a different one.

30. Passed Cape de Gata My wife was very ill, but gladly observed that illness itself, was not illness, compared to what she experienced in the winter voyage. She never complained, summer or winter. It is very distressing not to be able to give perfect comfort to patients of this generous description. The Mediterranean Sea, after the channel, was like a basin of gold fish; but when the winds are contrary, the waves of it have a short uneasy motion, that fidget the vessel, and make one long for the nobler billows of the Atlantic. The wind too was singularly unpleasant,—moist and feverish. It continued contrary for several days, but became more agreeable, and sunk almost into a calm on the 3d of June. It is difficult for people on shore, in spite of their geographical knowledge, not to suppose that the view is very extensive at sea. Intermediate objects being out of the way, and the fancy taking wing like the dove of Noah, they imagine the "ocean-floor," as the poets call it, stretching



in an interminable level all round, or bounded by an enormous horizon; whereas, the range of vision is limited to a circumference of about fourteen miles and the uninterrupted concave of the horizon all round, completes the look of enclosure and limitation. A man on the top of a moderate hill, may see four or five times as far as from the mainmast of a man-of-war. In the thin atmosphere of the south, the horizon appears to be still more circumscribed. You seem to have but a few miles around you, and can hardly help fancying that the sea is on a miniature scale, proportioned to its delicacy of behaviour.

On the day above-mentioned, we saw the land between Cape St. Martin and Alicant. The coast hereabouts is all of the same rude and grey character. From this night to the next it was almost a calm, when a more favourable wind sprang up at east-south-east. The books with which I chiefly amused myself in the Mediterranean, were "Don Quixote," (for reasons which will be obvious to the reader,) "Ariosto" and "Berni," (for similar reasons, their heroes having to do with the coasts of France and Africa,) and Bayle's admirable "Essay on Comets," which I picked up at Plymouth. It is the book that put an end to the superstition about comets. It is full of amusement, like all his dialectics; and holds together a perfect chain-armour of logic, the handler of which may also cut his fingers with it at every turn, almost every link containing a double edge. A generation succeeds quietly to the good done it by such works, and its benefactor's name is sunk in the washy, churchwarden pretensions of those whom he has enriched. As to what seems defective in Bayle on the score of natural piety, the reader may supply that. A benevolent work, tending to do away real dishonour to things supernatural, will be no hindrance to any benevolent addition which others can bring it; nor would Bayle, with his good-natured face, and the scholarly simplicity of his life, have found fault with it. But he was a soldier, after his fashion, with the qualities, both positive and negative, fit to keep him one; and some things must be dispensed with, in such a case, on the side of what is desirable, for the

sake of the part that is taken in the overthrow of what is detestable. Him whom inquisitors hate, angels may love.

All day, on the 5th, we were off the island of Yvica. The wind was contrary again till evening. Yvica was about ten miles off, when nearest. It has a barren look, with its rock in front. Spain was in sight; before and beyond, Cape St. Martin. The high land of Spain above the clouds had a look really mountainous. After having the sea to ourselves for a long while, we saw a vessel in our own situation, beating to wind and tide. Sympathy is sometimes cruel as well as kind. One likes to have a companion in misfortune. At night fell a calm.

6th. It was a grand thing this evening, to see on one side of us the sunset, and on the other *night* already on the sea. "Ruit oceano nox." It is not true that there is no twilight in the south, but it is very brief; and before the day is finished on one side, night is on the other. You turn, and behold it unexpectedly,—a black shade that fills one end of the horizon, and seems at once brooding and coming on. One sight like this, to a Hesiod or a Thales, is sufficient to fill poetry for ever with those images of brooding, and of raven wings, and the birth of Chaos, which are associated with the mythological idea of night. To-day we hailed a ship bound for Nice, which would not tell us the country she came from. Questions put by one vessel to another are frequently refused an answer for reasons of knavery or supposed policy. It was curious to hear our rough and informal captain speaking through his trumpet with all the precision and loud gravity of a preacher. There is a formula in use on these occasions, that has an old and scriptural effect. A ship descried, appears to the sailors like a friend visiting them in prison. All hands are interested: all eyes turn to the same quarter; the business of the vessel is suspended; and such as have license to do so, crowd on the gangway; the captain, with an air of dignity, having his trumpet brought him. You think that "What cheer, ho!" is to follow, or "Well, my lads, who are you; and where are you going?" Not so: the captain applies his mouth with a pomp of preparation, and you are startled with the following primitive

shouts, all uttered in a high formal tone, with due intervals between, as if a Calvinistic Stentor were questioning a man from the land of Goshen.

“What is your name?”

“Whence come you?”

“Whither are you bound?”

After the question “What is your name?” all ears are bent to listen. The answer comes, high and remote, nothing perhaps being distinguished of it but the vowels. The “Sall-of-Hym,” you must translate into the Sally of Plymouth. “Whence come you?” All ears are bent again. “Myr” or “Mau,” is Smyrna or Malta. “Whither are you bound?” All ears again. No answer. “D—d if he’ll tell,” cries the captain, laying down at once his trumpet and his scripture.

7th. Saw the Colombrettes, and the land about Tortosa. Here commences the classical ground of Italian romance. It was on this part of the west of Spain, that the Paynim chivalry used to land, to go against Charlemagne. Here Orlando played the tricks that got him the title of Furiosa; and from the port of Barcelona, Angelica and Medoro took ship for her dominion of Cathay. I confess I looked at these shores with a human interest, and could not help fancying that the keel of our vessel was crossing a real line, over which knights and lovers had passed. And so they have both, real and fabulous; the former not less romantic, the latter scarcely less real; to thousands, indeed, much more so; for who knows of hundreds of real men and women, that have crossed these waters, and suffered actual passion on those shores and hills? and who knows not Orlando and all the hard blows he gave, and the harder blow than all given him by two happy lovers; and the lovers themselves, the representatives of all the young love that ever was? I had a grudge of my own against Angelica, looking upon myself as jilted by those fine eyes which the painter has given her in the English picture; for I took her for a more sentimental person; but I excused her, seeing her beset and tormented by all those very meritorious knights, who thought they earned a right to her by hacking and hewing; and I more than pardoned her,



when I found that Medoro, besides being young and handsome, was a friend and a devoted follower. But what of that? They were both young and handsome; and love, at that time of life, goes upon no other merits, taking all the rest upon trust in the generosity of its wealth, and as willing to bestow a throne as a ribbon, to show the all-sufficiency of its contentment. Fair speed your sails over the lucid waters, ye lovers, on a lover-like sea! Fair speed them, yet never land; for where the poet has left you, there ought ye, as ye are, to be living for ever—for ever gliding about a summer-sea, touching at its flowery islands, and reposing beneath its moon.

The blueness of the water about these parts was excessive, especially in the shade next the vessel's side. The gloss of the sunshine was there taken off, and the colour was exactly that of the bottles sold in the shops with gold stoppers. In the shadows caused by the more transparent medium of the sails, an exquisite radiance was thrown up, like light struck out of a great precious stone. These colours, contrasted with the yellow of the horizon at sunset, formed one of those spectacles of beauty, which it is difficult to believe not intended to delight many more spectators than can witness them with human eyes. Earth and sea are full of gorgeous pictures, which seem made for a nobler and certainly a more numerous admiration, than is found among ourselves. Individuals may roam the loveliest country for a summer's day, and hardly meet a person bound on the same enjoyment as themselves. Does human nature flatter itself that all this beauty was made for its dull and absent eyes, gone elsewhere to poke about for pence? Or, if so, is there not to be discerned in it a new and religious reason for being more alive to the wholesome riches of nature, and less to those carking cares and un-neighbourly emulations of cities?

Sth. Calm till evening, when a fairer wind arose, which continued all night. There was a divine sunset over the mouth of the Ebro,—majestic, dark-embattled clouds, with an intense sun venting itself above and below like a Shekinah, and the rest of the heaven covered with large *flights* of little burnished and white clouds. It was what is called in England a mackarel

sky,—an appellation which may serve to show how much inferior it is to a sky of the same mottled description in the south. All colours in the north are comparatively cold and fishy. You have only to see a red cap under a Mediterranean sun, to be convinced that our painters will never emulate those of Italy as our poets have done. They are birds of a different clime, and are modified accordingly. They do not live upon the same lustrous food, and will never show it in their plumage. Poetry is the internal part, or sentiment, of what is material; and therefore, our thoughts being driven inwards, and rendered imaginative by these very defects of climate which discolour to us the external world, we have had among us some of the greatest poets that ever existed. It is observable, that the greatest poets of Italy came from Tuscany, where there is a great deal of inclemency in the seasons. The painters were from Venice, Rome, and other quarters; some of which, though more northern, are more genially situated. The hills about Florence made Petrarch and Dante well acquainted with winter; and they were also travellers, and unfortunate. These are mighty helps to reflection. Titian and Raphael had nothing to do but to paint under a blue sky half the day, and play with their mistress's locks all the rest of it. Let a painter in cloudy and bill-broking England do this, if he can.

9th. Completely fair wind at south-west. Saw Montserrat. The sun, reflected on the water from the lee studding-sail, was like shot silk. At half-past seven in the evening, night was risen in the east, while the sun was setting opposite. "Black night has come up already," said the captain. A fair breeze all night and all next day, took us on at the rate of about five miles an hour, very refreshing after the calms and foul winds. We passed the Gulf of Lyons still more pleasantly than we did the Bay of Biscay, for in the latter there was a calm. In both of these places, a little round handling is generally looked for. A hawk settled on the main-yard, and peered about the birdless main.

11. Light airs not quite fair, till noon, when they returned and were somewhat stronger. (I am thus particular in my daily notices, both to complete the reader's

sense of the truth of my narrative, and to give him the benefit of them in case he goes the same road.) The land about Toulon was now visible, and then the Heires Islands, a French paradise of oranges and sweet airs—

“ Cheer’d with the greatful smell, old Ocean smiles.”

The perfume exhaling from these and others flowery coasts is no fable, as every one knows who has passed Gibraltar and the coast of Genoa. M. le Franc de Pompignan, in some verses of the commonest French manufacture, tells us, with respect to the Hieres Islands, that Vertumnus, Pomona, Zephyr, &c. “ reign there always,” and that the place is “ the asylum of their loves, and the throne of their empire.” Very private and public!

“ Vertumne, Pomone, Zéphyre  
Avec Flore y règnent toujours ;  
C’est l’asyle de leurs amours,  
Et le trone de leur empire.”

It was the coast of Provence we were now looking upon, the land of the Troubadors. It seemed but a short cut over to Tripoli, where Geoffrey Rudel went to look upon his mistress and die. But our attention was called off by a less romantic spectacle, a sight unpleasant to an Englishman,—the *union* flag of Genoa and Sardinia hoisted on a boat. An independant flag of any kind is something ; a good old battered and conquered one is much ; but this bit of the Holy Alliance livery, patched up among his brother servants, by poor Lord Castlereagh, and making its bow in the very seas where Andrew Doria feasted an Emperor and refused a sovereignty, was a baulk of a very melancholy kind of burlesque. The Sardinian was returning with empty wine casks from the French coast; a cargo, which, at the hour of the day when we saw it, probably bore the liveliest possible resemblance to the heads whom he served. The wind fell in the evening, and there was a dead calm all night. At eleven o’clock, a grampus was heard breathing very hard, but we could not see it on account of the mists, the only ones we had experienced in the Mediterranean. These sounds of great fish in the night-time



are very imposing, the creature displacing a world of water about it, as it dips and rises at intervals on its billowy path.

12th. During the night we must have crossed the path which Bonaparte took to Antibes from Elba. We went over it as unconsciously as he now travels round with the globe in his long sleep. Talking with the captain to day, I learnt that his kindred and he monopolize the whole employment of his owner, and that his father served in it thirty years out of fifty. There is always something respectable in continuity and duration, where it is maintained by no ignoble means. If this family should continue to be masters and conductors of vessels for two or three generations more, especially in the same interest, they will have a sort of moral pedigree to show, far beyond those of many proud families, who do nothing at all because their ancestors did something a hundred years back. I will here set down a memorandum, with regard to vessels, which may be useful. The one we sailed in was marked A. I. in the shipping list: that is to say, it stood in the first class of the first rank of sea-worthy vessels; and it is in vessels of this class that people are always anxious to sail. In the present instance, the ship was worthy of the rank it bore: so was the one we buffeted the Channel in; or it would not have held out. But this mark of paime worthiness, A. I., a vessel is allowed to retain only ten years; the consequence of which is, that many ships are built to last only that time; and goods and lives are often entrusted to a weak vessel, instead of one which, though twice as old, is in twice as good condition. The best way is to get a friend who knows something of the matter, to make inquiries; and the sea-worthiness of the captain himself, his standing with his employers, &c. might as well be added to the list.

13th. The ALPS! It was the first time I had seen mountains. They had a fine sulky look, up aloft in the sky,—cold, lofty, and distant. I used to think that mountains would impress me but little; that by the same process of imagination reversed, by which a brook can be fancied a mighty river, with forests instead of verdure on its banks, a mountain could be made a mole-hill,

over which we step. But one look convinced me to the contrary. I found I could elevate, better than I could pull down, and I was glad of it. It was not that the sight of the Alps was necessary to convince me of "the being of a God," as it is said to have done Mr. Moore, or to put me upon any reflections respecting infinity and first causes, of which I have had enough in my time; but I seemed to meet for the first time a grand poetical thought in a material shape,—to see a piece of one's book-wonders realized,—something very earthly, yet standing between earth and heaven, like a piece of the antedeluvian world looking out of the coldness of ages. I remember reading in a Review a passage from some book of travels, which spoke of the author's standing on the sea-shore, and being led by the silence, and the abstraction, and the novel grandeur of the objects around him, to think of the earth, not in its geographical divisions, but as a planet in connexion with other planets, and rolling in the immensity of space. With these thoughts I have been familiar, as I suppose every one has been who knows what solitude is, and has an imagination, and perhaps not the best health. But we grow used to the mightiest aspects of thought, as we do to the immortal visages of the moon and stars: and therefore the first sight of the Alps, though much less things than any of these, and a toy, as I thought, for imagination to recreate itself with after their company, startles us like the disproof of a doubt, or the verification of an early dream,—a ghost, as it were, made visible by daylight, and giving us an enormous sense of its presence and materiality.

In the course of the day, we saw the table-land about Monaco. It brought to my mind the ludicrous distress of the petty prince of that place, when on his return from interchanging congratulations with his new masters—the legitimates, he suddenly met his old master, Napoleon, on *his* return from Elba. Or did he meet him when going *to* Elba? I forget which; but the distresses and confusion of the Prince were at all events as certain, as the superiority and amusement of the great man. In either case, this was the natural division of things, and the circumstances would have been the same.

A large grampus went by, heaping the water into clouds of foam. Another time, we saw a shark with his fin above water, which, I believe, is his constant way of going. The Alps were now fully and closely seen, and a glorious sunset took place. There was the greatest grandeur and the loveliest beauty. Among others was a small string of clouds, like rubies with facets, a very dark tinge being put here and there, as if by a painter, to set off the rest. Red is certainly the colour of beauty, and ruby the most beautiful of reds. It was in no commonplace spirit that Marlowe, in his list of precious stones, called them "*beauteous rubies*," but with exquisite gusto :—

“ Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,  
Jacinths, hard topas, grass-green emeralds,  
*Beauteous rubies*, sparkling diamonds,” &c.

They come upon you, among the rest, like the women of gems. All these colours we had about us in our Mediterranean sunsets ; and as if fortune would add to them by a freak of fancy, a little shoal of fish, sparkling as silver, leaped out of the water this afternoon, like a sprinkle of shillings. They were the anchovies, or Sardinias, that we eat. They give a burlesque title to the sovereign of these seas, whom the Tuscans call “ King of the Sardinias.”

We were now sailing up the angle of the Gulf of Genoa, its shore looking as Italian as possible, with groves and white villages. The names too were alluring,—Oneglia, Albenga, Savona ; the last, the birth-place of a sprightly poet, (Frugoni,) whose works I was acquainted with. The breeze was the strongest we had had yet, and not quite fair, but we made good head against it ; the queen-like city of Genoa, crowned with white palaces, sat at the end of the Gulf, as if to receive us in state ; and at two o’clock, the waters being as blue as the sky, and all hearts rejoicing, we entered our Italian harbour, and heard Italian words.

Luckily for us, these first words were Tuscan. A pilot-boat came out. Somebody asked a question which we did not hear, and the captain replied to it. “ *VA BENE*,” said the pilot in a fine open voice, and turned



the head of the boat with a tranquil dignity. "Va bene," thought I, indeed. "All goes well" truly. The words are delicious, and the omen good. My family have arrived so far in safety; we have but a little more voyage to make, a few steps to measure back in this calm Mediterranean; the weather is glorious; Italy looks like what we expected; in a day or two we shall hear of our friends; health and peace are before us, pleasure to others and profit to ourselves; and it is hard if we do not enjoy again, before long, the society of all our friends, both abroad and at home. In a day or two we received a letter from Mr. Shelley, saying that winds and waves, he hoped, would never part us more.

I intended to put below, in a note, what remarks I had made in another publication, respecting the city of Genoa; but they have been re-published in the compilation noticed in this work, purporting to be an account of the "Life and Times of Lord Byron." It is a compliment a little on the side of the free order of things, but such as I have never been inclined to complain of, especially where the compiler, as in the present instance, is polite in his petty larceny, and helps himself to your property in the style of Du Val.

In the harbour of Genoa, we lay next a fine American vessel, the captain of which, I thought, played the great man in a style beyond any thing I had seen in our English merchantmen. On the other side of us, was an Englishman, as fragile as the other was stout-built. Yet the captain, who was a strange fish, with a dialect more uncouth than any of us had heard, talked of its weathering the last winter capitally, and professed not to care any thing for a gale of wind, which he called a "gal o' wined." We here met with our winter vessel, looking as gay and summery as you please, and having an awning stretched over the deck, under which the captain politely invited us to dine. I went, and had the pleasure of meeting our friend the mate, and a good-natured countryman, residing at Genoa, who talked much of a French priest whom he knew, and whom he called "the prate." Our former companions, in completing their voyage, had had a bad time of it in the gulf of Lyons, during which

the ship was completely under water, the cook-house and bulwarks, &c. were carried away, and the men were obliged to be taken aft into the cabin two nights together. We had reason to bless ourselves that my wife was not there; for this would infallibly have put an end to her.

On the 28th of June, we set sail for Leghorn. The weather was still as wine as possible, and our concluding trip as agreeable; with the exception of a storm of thunder and lightning one night, which was the completest I ever saw. Our newspaper friend, "the oldest man living," ought to have been there to see it. The lightning fell in all parts of the sea, like pillars; or like great melted fires, suddenly dropt from a giant torch. Now it pierced the sea, like rods; now fell like enormous flakes or tongues, suddenly swallowed up. At one time, it seemed to confine itself to a dark corner of the ocean, making formidable shows of gigantic and flashing lances, (for it was the most perpendicular lightning I ever saw:) then it dashed broadly at the whole sea, as if it would sweep us away in flame; and then came in random portions about the vessel, treading the waves hither and thither, like the legs of fiery spirits descending in wrath. I then had a specimen (and confess I was not sorry to see it) of the fear which could enter even into the hearts of our "gallant heroes," when thrown into an unusual situation. The captain, almost the only man unmoved, or apparently so, (and I really believe he was as fearless on all occasions, as his native valour, to say nothing of his brandy and water, could make him) was so exasperated with the unequivocal alarm depicted in the faces of some of his crew, that he dashed his hand contemptuously at the poor fellow at the helm, and called him a coward. For our parts, having no fear of thunder and lightning, and not being fully aware perhaps of the danger to which vessels are exposed on these occasions, particularly if like our Channel friend they carry gunpowder (as most of them do, more or less) we were quite at our ease, compared with our inexperienced friends about us, who had never witnessed any thing of the like before, even in books. Besides, we thought it impossible for the Mediterranean to play us any serious trick,—that sunny and lucid ha-

sin, which we had beheld only in its contrast with a northern and a winter sea. Little did we think, that in so short a space of time, and somewhere about this very spot, a catastrophe would take place, that should put an end to all sweet thoughts both of the Mediterranean and the South.

Our residence at Pisa and Genoa has been already described, I must therefore request the reader to indulge me in a dramatic license, and allow us to grow three years older in the course of as many lines. By this time he will suppose us leaving Genoa for Florence. We were obliged to travel in the height of an Italian summer; which did no good to any of us. The children, living temperately, and not having yet got any cares on their shoulders, which temperance could not remove, soon recovered. It was otherwise with the rest; but there is a habit in being ill, as in every thing else; and we disposed ourselves to go through our task of endurance, as cheerfully as might be.

In Genoa you heard nothing in the streets but the talk of money. I hailed it a good omen in Florence, that the two first words which caught my ears, were Flowers and women (*Fiori* and *Donne*.) The night of our arrival we put up at a hotel in a very public street, and and were kept awake (as agreeably as fever would let us be) by songs and guitars. It was one of the pleasantest pieces of the south we had experienced: and, for the moment, we lived in the Italy of books. One performer, to a jovial accompaniment, sang a song about somebody's fair wife (*bianca moglie*,) which set the street in roars of laughter. From the hotel we went into a lodging in the street of Beautiful Women—*Via delle Belle Donne*—a name which it is a sort of tune to pronounce. We there heard one night a concert in the street; and looking out, saw music-stands, books, &c. in regular order, and amateurs performing as in a room. Opposite our lodging was an inscription on a house purporting that it was the Hospital of the Monks of Vallombrosa. Wherever you turned was music or a graceful memory. From the *Via delle Belle Donne* we went to live in the *Piazza Santa Croce*, next to the church of that name containing the ashes of Michael Angelo.



On the other side of it was the monastery, in which Pope Sixtus V. went stooping as if in decrepitude; "looking," as he said afterwards, "for the keys of St. Peter." We lodged in the house of a Greek, who came from the island of Andros, and was called Dionysius; a name, which has existed there perhaps ever since the god who bore it. Our host was a proper Bacchanalian, always drunk, and spoke faster than I ever heard. He had a "fair Andrian" for his mother, old and ugly, whose name was Bella.

The church of Santa Croce would disappoint you as much inside as out, if the presence of the remains of Great Men did not always cast a mingled shadow of the awful and beautiful over one's thought. Any large space also, devoted to the purposes of religion, though the religion be false, disposes the mind to the loftiest of speculations. The vaulted sky out of doors appears small, compared with the opening into immensity represented by that very enclosure,—that larger dwelling than common, entered by a little door; and we take off our hats, not so much out of earthly respect, as with the feeling that there should be nothing between our heads and the air of the next world.

Agreeably to our old rustic propensities, we did not stop long in the city. We left Santa Croce to live at Maiano, a village on the slope of one of the Fiesolan hills, about two miles off. I passed there a very disconsolate time; yet the greatest comfort I experienced in Italy was from living in that neighbourhood, and thinking, as I went about, of Boccaccio. Boccaccio's father had a house at Maiano, supposed to have been situate at the Fiesolan extremity of the hamlet. That divine writer (whose sentiment outweighed his levity a hundred fold, as a fine face is oftener serious than it is merry) was so fond of the place, that he has not only laid the two scenes of the Decameron on each side of it, with the valley his company resorted to in the middle, but has made the two little streams that embrace Maiano, the Affrico and the Mensola, the hero and heroine of his *Nimphale Fiesolano*. A lover and his vestal mistress are changed into them, after the fashion of Ovid. The scene of another of his works is on the banks of the

Mugnone, a river a little distant: and the Decameron is full of the neighbouring villages. Out of the windows of one side of our house, we saw the turret of the Villa Gherardi, to which his "joyous company" resorted in the first instance;—a house belonging to the Macchiavelli was nearer, a little to the left; and further to the left, among the blue hills, was the white village of Settignano, where Michael Angelo was born. The house is still remaining in possession of the family. From our windows on the other side we saw, close to us, the Fiesole of antiquity and of Milton, the site of the Boccaccio-house before-mentioned still closer, the Valley of Ladies at our feet; and we looked over towards the quarter of the Mugnone and of a house of Dante, and in the distance beheld the mountains of Pistoia. Lastly, from the terrace in front, Florence lay clear and cathedraled before us, with the scene of Redi's Bacchus rising on the other side of it, and the Villa of Arcetri, illustrious for Galileo.

But I stuck to my Boccaccio haunts, as to an old home. I lived with the divine human being, with his friends of the Falcon and the Basil, and my own not unworthy melancholy; and went about the flowering lanes and hills, solitary indeed, and sick to the heart, but not unsustained. In looking back to such periods of one's existence, one is surprised to find how much they surpass many occasions of mirth, and what a rich tone of colour their very darkness assumes, as in some fine old painting. My almost daily walk was to Fiesole, through a path skirted with wild myrtle and cyclamen; and I stopped at the cloister of the Doccia, and sat on the pretty melancholy platform behind it, reading, or looking through the pines down to Florence. In the Valley of Ladies, I found some English trees (trees not vine and olive) and even a meadow; and these, while I made them furnish me with a bit of my old home in the north, did no injury to the memory of Boccaccio, who is of all countries, and finds his home wherever we do ourselves, in love, in the grave, in a desert island.

But I had other friends too not far off, English, and of the right sort. My friend, Mr. Brown, occupied for a time the little convent of St. Baldassare, near Maiano.

where he represented the body corporate of the former possessors with all the jovialty of a comfortable natural piety. The closet in his study, where the church treasures had most likely been kept, was filled with the humanities of modern literature, not less Christian for being a little sceptical: and we had a zest in fancying that we discoursed of love and wine in the apartments of the Lady Abbess. I remember I had the pleasure of telling an Italian gentleman there the joke attributed to the Reverend Mr. Sydney Smith, about sitting next a man at table, who had "a seven-parson power;" and he understood it, and rolled with laughter, crying out—"Oh, ma bello! ma bellissimo!" There, too, I had the pleasure of dining in company with an English beauty, (Mrs. W.) who appeared to be such as Boccaccio might have admired, capable both of mirth and gravity; and she had a child with her that reflected her graces. The appearance of one of these young English mothers among Italian women, is like domesticity among the passions. It is a pity when you return to England, that the generality of faces do not keep up the charm. You are then too apt to think that an Italian beauty among English women would look like poetry among the sullens.

My friend B. removed to Florence; and together with the books and newspapers, made me a city visiter. I there became acquainted with Mr. Landor, to whose talents I had made the *amende honorable* the year before; and with Mr. Kirkup, an English artist, who is poor enough, I fear, neither in purse nor accomplishment, to cultivate his profession as he ought; and so beloved by his friends, that they must get at a distance from him before they can tell him of it. And yet I know not why they should; for a man of a more cordial generosity, with greater delicacy in showing it, I have never met with: and such men deserve the compliment of openness. They know how to receive it. To the list of my acquaintances, I had the honour of adding Lord Dillon, who in the midst of an exuberance of temperament more than national, conceals a depth of understanding, and a genuine humanity of knowledge, to which proper justice is not done in consequence. The vegetation and the unstable ground divert suspicion from the ore beneath it.



I remember his saying something one evening about a very ill-used description of persons in the London streets, for which Shakspeare might have taken him by the hand; though the proposition came in so startling a shape, that the company were obliged to be shocked in self-defence. The gallant Viscount is not the better for being a Lord. I never knew, or read of a clever man, that was. It makes the most natural men artificial, and perplexes them with contradictory ambitions. A proper Lord, being constituted of nothing, judiciously consents to remain so, and avoids trenching upon realities. I must also take leave to doubt, whether Roscommon will not remain the greatest poet among the Dillons, notwithstanding the *minaccie* of Ezzelino. But his Lordship is not the less worthy of a race of intelligent men and noble adventurers. He is a cavalier of the old school of the Meadowses and Newcastles, with something of the O'Neal superadded; and instead of wasting his words upon tyrants or Mr. Pitt, ought to have been eternally at the head of his brigade, charging on his war-horse, and meditating romantic stories.

Mr. Landor, who has long been known to scholars as a Latin poet beyond the elegance of centos, and has lately shown himself one of our most powerful writers of prose, is a man of a vehement nature, with great delicacy of imagination. He is like a stormy mountain pine, that should produce lilies. After indulging the partialities of his friendships and enmities, and trampling on kings and ministers, he shall cool himself, like a Spartan worshipping a moon-beam, in the patient meekness of Lady Jane Grey. I used to think he did wrong in choosing to write Latin verse instead of English. The opinions he has expressed on that subject, in the eloquent treatise appended to his Latin poems, will, I am sure, hardly find a single person to agree with them. But as an individual, working out his own case, I think he was right in giving way to the inspiration of his scholarship. Independent, learned, and leisurely, with a temperament, perhaps, rather than a mind, poetical, he walked among the fields of antiquity, till he beheld the forms of poetry with the eyes of their inhabitants; and it is agreeable, as a variety, among the crowds of ordi-

nary scholars, especially such as affect to think the great modern poets little ones because they are not ancient, to have one who can really fancy and feel with Ovid and Catullus, as well as read them. Mr. Landor has the veneration for all poetry, ancient or modern, that belongs to a scholar who is himself a poet. He loves Chaucer and Spenser, as well as Homer. That he deserves the title, the reader will be convinced on opening his book of "Idyls," where the first thing he encounters will be the charming duel between Cupid and Pan, full of fancy and archness, with a deeper emotion at the end. His "Lyrics," with the exception of a pretty vision about Ceres and her poppies, (which is in the spirit of an Idyl,) do not appear to me so good: but upon the whole though it is a point on which I am bound to speak with diffidence, he seems to me by far the best Latin poet we possess, after Milton; more in good taste than the incorrectness and diffuseness of Cowley; and not to be lowered by a comparison with the mimic elegancies of Addison. Vincent Bourne, I conceive to be a genuine hand; but I know him only in a piece or two.

Mr. Landor was educated at Rugby, and became afterwards the friend and favourite pupil of Dr. Parr. With a library, the smallness of which surprised me, and which he must furnish out, when he writes on English subjects, by the help of a rich memory,—he lives, among his paintings and hospitalities, in a style of unostentatious elegance, very becoming a scholar that can afford it. The exile, in which he chooses to continue at present, is as different from that of his friend Ovid, as his *Tristia* would have been, had he thought proper to write any. Augustus would certainly have found no whining in him, much less any worship. He has some fine children, with whom he plays like a real schoolboy, being, in truth, as ready to complain of an undue knock, as he is to laugh, shout, and scramble; and his wife (I really do not know whether I ought to take these liberties, but the nature of the book into which I have been beguiled must excuse me, and ladies must take the consequence of being agreeable,)—his wife would have made Ovid's loneliness quite another thing, with her face radiant with good-humour. Mr. Landor's conversation is live-

ly and unaffected, as full of scholarship or otherwise as you may desire, and dashed now and then with a little superfluous will and vehemence, when he speaks of his likings and dislikes. His laugh is in peals, and climbing: he seems to fetch every fresh one from a higher story. Speaking of the Latin poets of antiquity, I was struck with an observation of his; that Ovid was the best-natured of them all. Horace's perfection that way he doubted. He said, that Ovid had a greater range of pleasurable ideas, and was prepared to do justice to every thing that came in his way. Ovid was fond of noticing his rivals in wit and genius, and has recorded the names of a great number of his friends; whereas Horace seems to confine his eulogies to such as were rich or in fashion, and well received at court.

When the "Liberal" was put an end to, I had contributed some articles to a new work set up by my brother, called the "Literary Examiner." Being too ill at Florence to continue these, I did what I could, and had recourse to the lightest and easiest translation I could think of, which was that of Redi's "Bacco in Toscana." I believe it fell dead-born from the press. Like the wines it recorded, it would not keep. Indeed it was not very likely that the English public should take much interest in liquors not their own, and enthusiastic allusions to times and places with which they had no sympathy. Animal spirits also require to be read by animal spirits, or at least by a melancholy so tempered as to consider them rather as desirable than fantastic:—perhaps my own relish of the original was not sprightly enough at the time to do it justice; and, at all events, it is requisite that what a man does say in his vivacity should not be doubly spoilt in the conveyance. Bell's Edition of Shakspeare, is said to have been the worst edition ever put forth of a British author. Perhaps the translation of the "Bacchus in Tuscany" was the worst ever printed. It was mystified with upwards of fifty mistakes.

At Maiano, I wrote the articles which appeared in the "Examiner," under the title of the "Wishing Cap." It was a very genuine title. When I put on my cap, and pitched myself in imagination into the thick of



Covent-Garden, the pleasure I received was so vivid,—I turned the corner of a street so much in the ordinary course of things, and was so tangibly present to the pavement, the shop-windows, the people, and a thousand agreeable recollections which looked me naturally in the face; that sometimes when I walk there now, the impression seems hardly more real. I used to feel as if I actually pitched my soul there, and that spiritual eyes might have seen it shot over from Tuscany into York-street, like a rocket. It is much pleasanter, however, on waking up, to find soul and body together in one's favourite neighbourhood: yes, even than among thy olives and vines, Boccaccio! I not only missed "the town" in Italy; I missed my old trees,—oaks and elms. Tuscany, in point of wood, is nothing but an olive-ground and vineyard. I saw there, how it was, that some persons when they return from Italy say it has no wood, and some a great deal. The fact is, that many parts of it, Tuscany included, has no wood to *speak of*; and it wants larger trees interspersed with the smaller ones, in the manner of our hedge-row elms. A tree of a reasonable height is a Godsend. The olives are low and hazy-looking, like dry sallows. You have plenty of those; but to an Englishman, looking from a height, they appear little better than brush-wood. Then there are no meadows, no proper green lanes (at least, I saw none,) no paths leading over field and style, no hay-fields in June, nothing of that luxurious combination of green and russet, of grass, wild flowers, and woods, over which a lover of Nature can stroll for hours with a foot as fresh as the stag's; unvexed with chalk, dust, and an eternal public path; and able to lie down, if he will, and sleep in clover. In short, (saving a little more settled weather,) we have the best part of Italy in books, be it what it may; and this we can enjoy in England. Give me Tuscany in Middlesex or Berkshire, and the Valley of Ladies between Harrow and Jack Straw's Castle. The proud names and flinty ruins above the Mensola may keep their distance. Boccaccio shall build a bower for us, out of his books, of all that we choose to import; and we will have daisies and fresh meadows besides. An Italian may prefer his own country after the same fash-

ion; and he is right. I knew a young Englishwoman, who, having grown up in Tuscany, thought the landscapes of her native country insipid, and could not imagine how people could live without walks in vineyards. To me Italy has a certain hard taste in the mouth. Its mountains are too bare, its outlines too sharp, its lanes too stony, its voices too loud, its long summer too dusty. I longed to bathe myself in the grassy balm of my native fields. But I was ill, uncomfortable, in a perpetual fever; and critics, if they are candid, should give us a list of the infirmities, under which they sit down to estimate what they differ with. What returns of sick and wounded we should have at the head of some of our periodicals!

Before I left Italy, I had the pleasure of frightening the Tuscan government by proposing to set up a compilation from the English Magazines. They are rarely seen in that quarter, though our countrymen are numerous. In the year 1825, two hundred English families were said to be resident in Florence. In Rome, visitors, though not families, were more numerous; and the publication, for little cost, might have been sent all over Italy. The plan was to select none but the very best articles, and follow them with an original one commenting upon their beauties, and making the English in-Italy well acquainted with our living authors. But the Tuscan authorities were fairly struck with consternation. "You must submit the publication to a censorship."—"Be it so."—"But you must let them see every sheet, before it goes to press, in order that there may be no religion or politics."—"Very well:—to please the reverend censors, I will have no religion: politics are also out of the question."—"Ay, but politics may creep in."—"They shall not."—"Ah, but they may creep in, without your being aware; and then what is to be done?"—"Why, if neither the editor nor the censors are aware, I do not see that any very vivid impression need be apprehended with regard to the public."—"That appears very plausible; but how if the censors do not understand English?"—"There indeed you have me. All I can say is, that the English understand the censors, and I see we must drop our intended work."—This was

the substance of a discourse I had with the bookseller, after communication with the authorities. The prospectus had been drawn out; the bookseller had rubbed his hands at it, thinking of the money which the Byrons and Walter Scotts of England were preparing for him; but he was obliged to give in. "Ah," said he to me in his broken English, as he sat in winter-time with cold feet and an irritable face, pretending to keep himself warm by tantalizing the tip of his fingers over a little basin of charcoal,—“Ah, you are verree happee in England; you can get so much money as you please.”

It was a joyful day that enabled us to return to England. I will quote a letter which a friend has preserved, giving an account of the first part of our journey; for these things are best told while the impression is most lively.

\* \* \* \*

“I had a proper Bacchanalian parting with Florence. A stranger and I cracked a bottle together in high style. He ran against me with a flask of wine in his hand, and divided it gloriously between us. It was impossible to be angry with his good-humoured face; so we complimented one another on our joviality, and parted on the most flourishing terms. In the evening I cracked another flask, with equal abstinence of inside. Mr. Kirkup (whom you have heard me speak of) made me a present of a vine stick. He came to Maiano, with Mr. Brown, to take leave of us; so we christened the stick, as they do a seventy-four, and he stood *rod-father*.

“We set off next morning at six o'clock. I took leave of Maiano with a dry eye, Boccaccio and the Valley of Ladies notwithstanding. But the grave face of Brown (who had stayed all night, and was to continue doing us good after we had gone, by seeing to our goods and chattles,) was not so easily to be parted with. I was obliged to gulp down a sensation in the throat, such as men cannot very well afford to confess “in these degenerate days,” especially to a lady, So I beg you will have a respect for it, and know it for what it is. Old Lear and Achilles made nothing of owning to it. But before we get on, I must make you acquainted with our mode of travelling.



“We go not by post, but by Vettura ; that is to say, by easy stages of thirty or forty miles a day, in a travelling carriage, the box of which is turned into a chaise, with a calash over it. It is drawn by three horses, occasionally assisted by mules. We pay about eighty-two guineas English, for which sum ten of us (counting as six, because of the number of children,) are taken to Calais ; have a breakfast and dinner every day on the road ; are provided with five beds at night, each containing two persons ; and are to rest four days during the journey, without farther expense, in whatever portions and places we think fit. Our breakfast consists of coffee, bread, fruit, milk, and eggs ; plenty of each : the dinner of the four indispensable Italian dishes, something roast, something boiled, something fried, and what they call an *umido*, which is a hash, or something of that sort ; together with vegetables, wine, and fruit. Care must be taken that the Vetturino does not crib from this allowance by degrees, otherwise the dishes grow fewer and smaller ; meat disappears on a religious principle, it being *magro* day, on which “nothing is to be had ;” and the vegetables adhering to their friend the meat in his adversity, disappear likewise. The reason of this is, that the Vetturino has a conflicting interest within him. It is his interest to please you in hope of other custom ; and it his interest to make the most of the sum of money, which his master allows him for expenses. Withstand, however, any change at first, and good behaviour may be reckoned upon. We have as pleasant a little Tuscan to drive us, as I ever met with. He began very handsomely ; but finding us willing to make the best of any little deficiency, he could not resist the temptation of giving up the remoter interest for the nearer one. We found our profusion diminish accordingly ; and at Turin, after cunningly asking us, whether we cared to have an inn not of the very highest description, he has brought us to one of which it can only be said that it is not of the very lowest. The landlord showed us into sordid rooms on a second story. I found it necessary to be base and make a noise ; upon which little Gigi looked frightened, and the landlord looked slavish and bowed us into his

best. We shall have no more of this. Our rogue has an excellent temper, and is as honest a rogue, I will undertake to say, as ever puzzled a formalist. He makes us laugh with his resemblance to Mr. Lamb; whose countenance, a little jovialized, he engrafts upon an active little body and pair of legs, walking about in his jack-boots as if they were pumps. But he must have some object in life, to carry him so many times over the Alps:—this of necessity is money. You may guess that we could have dispensed with some of the fried and roasted; but to do this, would be to subject ourselves to other diminutions. Our bargain is reckoned a good one. The coachmaster says, (believe him who will,) that he could not have afforded it, had he not been sure at this time of the year, that somebody would take his coach back again; so many persons come to winter in Italy.

“Well, now that you have all the prolegomena, right and tight, we will set off again. We were told to look for a barren road from Florence to Bologna, but were most agreeably disappointed. The vines and olives disappeared, which was a relief to us. Instead of these, and the comparatively petty ascents about Florence, we had proper swelling Apennines, valley and mountain, with fine sloping meadows of green, interspersed with wood. We stopped to refresh ourselves at noon at an inn called *Le Maschere*, where there is a very elegant prospect, a mixture of nature with garden ground; and slept at *Covigliaio*, where three tall buxom damsels waited upon us, who romped during supper with the men-servants. One of them had a nicer voice than the others, upon the strength of which she stepped about with a jaunty air in a hat and feathers, and made the *aimable*. A Greek came in with a long beard; which he poked into all the rooms by way of investigation; as he could speak no language but his own. I asked one of the girls why she looked so frightened; upon which she shrugged her shoulders and said, “*Oh Dio!*” as if Blue Beard had come to put her in his seraglio.

“Our vile inn knocked us up; so I would not write any more yesterday. Little Gigi came up yesterday evening with a grave face, to tell us that he was not

aware till that moment of its being part of his duty, by the agreement, to pay expenses during our days of stopping. He had not looked into the agreement till then! The rogue! So we lectured him, and forgave him for his good temper: and he is to be very honest and expensive in future. This episode of the postilion has put me out of the order of my narration.

“To resume then. Next morning the 11th, we set off at five, and passed a volcanic part of the Apennines, where a flame issues from the ground. We thought we saw it. The place is called Pietra Mala. Here we enter upon the Pope’s territories, as if his Holiness kept the keys of a very different place from what he pretends. We refreshed at Poggioli, in sight of a church upon a hill, called the Monte dei Formicoli. They say all the ants in the neighbourhood come into the church on a certain day, in the middle of the service, and make a point of dying during the mass; but the postilion said, that for his part he did not believe it. Travelling makes people sceptical. The same evening we got to Bologna, where we finished for the present with mountains. The best streets in Bologna are furnished with arcades, very sensible things, which we are surprised to miss in any city in a hot country. They are to be found, more or less, as you travel northwards. The houses are all kept in good-looking order, owing, I believe, to a passion the Bolognese have for a gorgeous anniversary, against which every thing animate and inanimate puts on its best. I could not learn what it was. Besides tapestry and flowers, they bring out their pictures to hang in front of the houses. Many cities in Italy disappoint the eye of the traveller. The stucco and plaister outside the houses gets worn, and, together with the open windows, gives them a squalid and deserted appearance. But the name is always something. If Bologna were nothing of a city, it would still be a fine sound and a sentiment; a thing recorded in art, in poetry, in stories of all sorts. We passed next day over a flat country, and dined at Modena, which is neither so good-looking a city; nor so well sounding a recollection as Bologna: but it is still Modena, the native place of Tassoni. I went to the cathedral to get sight of the Secchia which



is hung up there, but found the doors shut; and as ugly a pile of building as a bad cathedral could make. The lions before the doors, look as if some giant's children had made them in sport, wretchedly sculptured, and gaping as if in agony at their bad legs. It was a disappointment to me not to see the Bucket. The Secchia Rapita is my oldest Italian acquaintance, and I reckoned upon saying to the hero of it 'Ah, ha! There you are!' There is something provoking and yet something fine too, in flitting in this manner from city to city. You are vexed at not being able to stop and see pictures, &c.; but you have a sort of royal taste of great pleasures in passing. The best thing one can do to get at the interior of any thing in this hurry, is to watch the countenances of the people. I thought the looks of the Bolognese and Modenese singularly answered to their character in books. What is more singular, is the extraordinary difference, and nationality of aspect, in the people of two cities at so little distance from one another. The Bolognese have a broad steady look, not without geniality and richness. You can imagine them to give birth to painters. The Modenese are crusty looking and carking, with a dry twinkle at you, and a narrow mouth. They are critics and satirists, on the face of them. For my part, I never took very kindly to Tassoni, for all my young acquaintance with him; and in the war which he has celebrated, I am now, whatever I was before, decidedly for the Bolognese."

On the 12th of September, after dining at Modena, we slept at Reggio, where Ariosto was born. His father was captain of the citadel. Boiardo, the poet's precursor, was born at Scandiano, not far off. I ran, before the gates were shut, to get a look at the citadel, and was much the better for not missing it. Poets leave a greater charm than any men upon places they have rendered famous, because they sympathize more than any other men with localities, and indentify themselves with the least beauty of art or nature,—a turret, an old tree. The river Ilissus at Athens is found to be a sorry brook; but it runs talking for ever of Plato and Sophocles.

At Parma, I tore my hair mentally, (much the plea-

santest way,) at not being able to see the Correggios. Piacenza pleased one to be in it, on account of the name. But a list of places in Italy is always like a succession of musical chords. Parma, Piacenza, Voghera, Tortona, Felizana,—sounds like these make a road-book a music-book. At Asti, a pretty place with a “west end,” full of fine houses, I went to look at the Alfieri palace, and tried to remember the poet with pleasure: but I could not like him. To me, his austerity is only real in the unpleasantest part of it. The rest is affected. The human heart is a tough business in his hands; and he thumps and turns it about in his short, violent, and pounding manner, as if it were an iron on a blacksmith’s anvil. He loved liberty like a tyrant, and the Pretender’s widow like a lord.

The first sight of the Po, and the mulberry-trees, and meadows, and the Alps, was at once classical, and Italian, and northern; and made us feel that we were taking a great new step nearer home. Poirino, a pretty little place, with a name full of pear-trees, presented us with a sight like a passage in Boccaccio. This was a set of Dominican friars with the chief at their head, issuing out of two coaches, and proceeding along the corridor of the inn to dinner, each holding a bottle of wine in his hand, with the exception of the abbot, who held two. The wine was doubtless their own, that upon the road not being sufficiently orthodox.

Turin is a noble city, like a set of Regent Streets, made twice as tall. We found here the most military-looking officers we remember to have seen, fine, tall, handsome fellows, whom the weather had beaten but not conquered, very gentlemanly, and combining the officer and soldier as completely as could be wished. They had served under Bonaparte. When I saw them, I could understand how it was that the threatened Piedmontese revolution was more dreaded by the legitimates than any other movement in Italy. It was betrayed by the heir-apparent, who is said to be as different a looking person, as the reader might suppose. The royal aspect in the Sardinias is eminent among the raffish of the earth.

At Turin was the finest dancer I ever saw, a girl of the name of De' Martini. M. Laurent should invite her over. She appeared to me to unite the agility of the French school, with all that you would expect from the Italian. Italian dancers are in general as indifferent, as the French are celebrated: but the French have no mind with their bodies: they are busts in barbers' shops, stuck upon legs in a fit. You wonder how any lower extremities so lively can leave such an absence of all expression in the upper. Now De' Martini is a dancer all over, and does not omit her face. She is a body not merely saltatory, as a machine might be, but full of soul. When she came bounding on the stage, in two or three long leaps like a fawn, I should have thought she was a Frenchwoman, but the style undeceived me. She came bounding in front, as if she would have pitched herself into the arms of the pit; then made a sudden drop, and addressed three enthusiastic courtesies to the pit and boxes, with a rapidity and yet a grace, a self-abandonment, yet a self-possession, quite extraordinary, and such, as to do justice to it, should be described by a poet uniting the western ideas of the sex with eastern license. Then she is beautiful both in face and figure, and I thought was a proper dancer to appear before a pit full of those fine fellows I have just spoken of. She seemed as complete in her way as themselves. In short, I never saw any thing like it before; and did not wonder, that she had the reputation of turning the heads of dozens wherever she went.

At Sant-Ambrogio, a little town between Turin and Susa, is a proper castle-topped mountain *à la Radcliffe*, the only one we had met with. Susa has some remains connected with Augustus; but Augustus is nobody, or ought to be nobody, to a traveller in modern Italy. He, and twenty like him, never gave me one sensation, all the time I was there; and even the better part of the Romans it is difficult to think of. There is something formal and cold about their history, in spite of Virgil and Horace, and even in spite of their own violence, which does not harmonize with the south. And their poets, even the best of them, were copiers of the Greek



poets, not originals like Dante and Petrarch. So we slept at Susa, not thinking of Augustus, but listening to waterfalls, and thinking of the Alps.

Next morning we beheld a sight worth living for. We were now ascending the Alps; and while yet in the darkness before the dawn, we beheld the sunshine of day basking on the top of one of the mountains. We drank it into our souls, and there it is for ever. Dark as any hour may be, it seems as if that sight were left for us to look up to, and feel a hope. The passage of the Alps (thanks to Bonaparte, whom a mountaineer, with brightness in his eyes, called "*Napoleone di felice me moria*") is now as easy as a road in England. You look up towards airy galleries, and down upon villages that appear like toys, and feel somewhat disappointed at rolling over it all so easily.

The moment we passed the Alps, we found ourselves in France. At Lanslebourg, French was spoken, and amorous groups gesticulated on the papering and curtains. Savoy is a glorious country, a wonderful intermixture of savage precipices and pastoral meads: but the roads are still uneven and bad. The river ran and tumbled, as if in a race with our tumbling carriage. At one time you are in a road like a gigantic rut, deep down in a valley; and at another, up in the air, wheeling along a precipice, I know not how many times as high as St. Paul's.

At Chambéry I could not resist going to see the house of Rousseau and Madame de Warens, while the coach stopped. It is up a beautiful lane, where you have trees all the way, sloping fields on either side, and a brook; as fit a scene as could be desired. I met some Germans coming away, who congratulated me on being bound, as they had been, to the house of "*Jean Jacques*." The house itself is of the humbler genteel class, not fitted to conciliate Mr. Moore; but neat and white, with green blinds. The little chapel, that cost its mistress so much, is still remaining. We proceeded through Lyons and Auxerre to Paris. Beyond Lyons, we met on the road the statue of Louis XIV. going to that city to overawe it with royal brass. It was an

esquestrian statue, covered up, guarded with soldiers, and looking on the road like some mysterious heap. Don Quixote would have attacked it, and not been thought mad : so much has romance done for us. The natives would infallibly have looked quietly on. There was a riot about it at Lyons, soon after its arrival. Statues rise and fall ; but a little on the other side of Lyons, our postilion exclaimed, " Monte Bianco !" and turning round, I beheld, for the first time, Mont Blanc, which had been hidden from us, when near it, by a fog. It looked like a turret in the sky, amber-coloured, golden, belonging to the wall of some etherial world. This, too, is in our memories for ever,—an addition to our stock,—a light for memory to turn to, when it wishes a beam upon its face.

At Paris we could stop but two days, and I had but two thoughts in my head ; one of the Revolution, the other of the times of Molière and Boileau. Accordingly, I looked about for the Sorbonne, and went to see the place where the guillotine stood ; were thousands of spirits underwent the last pang ; many guilty, many innocent,—but all the victims of a re-action against tyranny, such as will never let tyranny be what it was, unless a convulsion of nature should swallow up knowledge, and make the world begin over again. These are the thoughts that enable us to bear such sights, and that serve to secure what we hope for.

Paris, besides being a beautiful city in the quarter that strangers most look to, the Tuileries, Quai de Voltaire, &c., delights the eye of a man of letters by its heap of book-stalls. There is a want perhaps of old books ; but the new are better than the shoal of Missals and Lives of the Saints that disappoint the lover of duodecimos on the stalls of Italy ; and the Rousseaus and Voltaires are endless ; edition upon edition in all shapes and sizes, in intellectual battle-array, not to be put down, and attracting armies into desertion. I thought, if I were a bachelor, not an Englishman, and had no love for old friends and fields, I could live very well for the rest of my life in a lodging above one of the bookseller's shops on the Quai de Voltaire, where

I should look over the water to the Tuileries, and have the Elysian fields in my eye for my evening walk.

I liked much what little I saw of the French people. They are accused of vanity; and doubtless they have it, and after a more obvious fashion than other nations; but their vanity at least includes the wish to please; other people are necessary to them; they are not wrapped up in themselves; not sulky, not too vain even to tolerate vanity. Their vanity is too much confounded with self-satisfaction. There is a good deal of touchiness, I suspect, among them,—a good deal of ready-made heat, prepared to fire up in case the little commerce of flattery and sweetness is not properly carried on. But this is better than ill temper, or an egotism not to be appeased by any thing short of subjection. On the other hand, there is more melancholy than one could expect, especially in old faces. Consciences in the south are frightened in their old age, perhaps for nothing. In the north I take it, they are frightened earlier, perhaps from equal want of knowledge. The worst in France is, (at least, from all that I saw) that *fine* old faces are rare. There are multitudes of pretty girls; but the faces of both sexes fall off deplorably as they advance in life; which is not a good symptom. Nor do the pretty faces, while they last, appear to contain much depth, or sentiment, or firmness of purpose. They seem made like their toys, not to last, but to break up. Fine faces in Italy are as abundant as cypresses. However, in both countries, the inhabitants appeared to us naturally amiable, as well as intelligent; and without disparagement to the angel faces which you meet with in England, and some of which are perhaps even finer than any you see elsewhere, I could not help thinking, that as a race of females, the aspects both of the French and Italian women announced more sweetness and reasonableness of intercourse, than those of my fair and serious countrywomen. A Frenchwoman looked as if she wished to please you at any rate, and to be pleased herself. She is too conscious; and her coquetry is said, and I believe with truth, to promise more than an Englishman would easily find her to perform: but at any rate she thinks of you



somehow, and is smiling and good-humoured. An Italian woman appears to think of nothing, not even herself. Existence seems enough for her. But she also is easy of intercourse, smiling when you speak to her, and very unaffected. Now in simplicity of character the Italian appears to me to have the advantage of the English women, and in pleasantness of intercourse both Italian and French. When I came to England, after a residence of four years abroad, I was shocked at the succession of fair sulky faces which I met in the streets of London. They all appeared to come out of unhappy homes. In truth, our virtues, or our climate, or whatever it is, sit so uneasily upon us, that it is surely worth while for our philosophy to inquire whether in some points, or some degree of a point, we are not a little mistaken. Gypseys will hardly allow us to lay it to the climate.

It was a blessed moment, nevertheless, when we found ourselves among those dear sulky faces, the countrywomen of dearer ones, not sulky. On the 12th of October, we set out from Calais in the steam-boat, which carried us rapidly to London, energetically trembling all the way under us, as if its burning body partook of the fervour of our desire. Here, in the neighbourhood of London, we are; and may we never be without our old fields again in this world, or the old "familiar faces" in this world or in the next.

THE END.











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